# new masses

JULY 2, 1946
Vol. LX, No. 1 • 15c; in Canada 20c

## THE TRADITION OF "PURE POETRY" by Jean Larnac

## THE ATOM: BARUCH AND GROMYKO by John Stuart

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# just a minute

SEVERAL of our editors were out of town during the last few weeks, meeting NM's readers and contributors, and they recommend the experience to those of us who stayed home slaving over a hot pile of copy. Joe North was full of enthusiasm when he came back from Montreal. He spoke in the Central High School there to a meeting of five hundred or so, and talked afterward with a number of veterans, dockworkers, graduates of McGill University and others, many of whom liked the changes in NM and had followed its development closely. "The Canadian progressives I met struck me as feeling that they were intimately involved in the political lives of three countries—Canada, England and the US," he reported. "Their outlook was genuinely international." To illustrate the close interest in NM he told of a railroad worker and his wife who were in Montreal for their vacation. They'd come from a small town 1,800 miles off in Canada's vast northwest, where they'd been reading NM each week from cover to cover. "They were happy to meet someone from NM," Joe relates, "because they had a problem. What did Refregier's drawing on the cover of the May 7 issue mean? [Ref did a rather fanciful gent floating through space with a trayful of shoes, milk, poultry, houses and fruit balanced on his head.] They'd studied it carefully, and my railroad friend couldn't dope it out, though his wife insisted it had to do with inflation. (She was right.) And they asked all sorts of questions about past and present contributors to NM; they remembered articles I didn't remember myself. It gave me a pretty good feeling."

ABE MAGIL also reports a successful trip, during the course of which he spoke in Cleveland, Akron, and Cincinnati, where he gained about fifty new readers for NM, raised some modest amounts toward our fund drive and Met the People. In Cincinnati, where his appearance was sponsored by the Communist Party, he spoke at the first public meeting the Party had held there for several years.

He told of a farmer who came from thirty miles away for the meeting, and of a restaurant owner who came twenty-five miles to congratulate him on his recent pamphlet ("Socialism—What's in it for You") and relate happily that he'd sold quantities of them from a stack he kept handy on his counter. "People in Ohio really go for socialism," the restaurant owner reported, "when they find out what it is."

JOE FOSTER is in Hollywood now, after a tour which included several cities, and the annual NM Hollywood Art Auction is set for July 19 (see page 29). He writes: "The trip across the country was fruitful. Not only did it net some fifty new subs, but the Minneapolis group took a quota of $500 and promised to raise it this Fall, and every Fall thereafter. This committee suggests that similar quotas be set up in other sections of the country, to help overcome our annual deficit." Good for Joe Foster and good for Minneapolis. We'd like to tell you what's in some of his other letters, but for a certain technical reason—namely that they're in Beatrice Siskind's file and Bea is on her vacation and nobody undertands her filing system—we can't. Some other time.

WISH you'd all been up at Allaben with us on NM's weekend. Some sixty of you were, and we had a wonderful time. We sang, swam, danced, we got sunburned while we listened to Herb Aptheker and Charlie Keller on the lawn (in our opinion Herb's discussion of "intelligence" tests and Charlie's chalk-talk were worth the trip alone); and in a supercolossal tennis match between the editorial and business offices, this department got blanked by Paul Kaye, who puts a nasty spin on his ball. If you missed this one, you've got another chance—we're planning another weekend sometime in September. Hope to see you then.

PERSONAL: will the reader who sent us a Canadian five-dollar bill please get in touch with our business office? B.M.


# new masses

e s t a b l i s h e d 1 9 1 1



**EDITORIAL BOARD:**
**STAFF: editor: JOSEPH NORTH. executive editor: A. B. MAGIL. managing editor: LLOYD L. BROWN. FREDERICK V. FIELD, JOHN STUART. washington editor: VIRGINIA GARDNER. art editor: CHARLES KELLER. assistant editors: JOSEPH FOSTER, CHARLES HUMBOLDT. ASSOCIATES: JAMES S. ALLEN, HERBERT APTHEKER, RICHARD O. BOYER, HOWARD FAST, WILLIAM GROPPER, V. J. JEROME, ALBERT E. KAHN.**
**editorial assistant: BETTY MILLARD.**
**business manager: PAUL KAYE. field director: DORETTA TARMON. promotion manager: BEATRICE SISKIND.**
**advertising manager: GERTRUDE CHASE.**
**CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: LOUIS ARAGON • NATHAN AUSUBEL • LIONEL BERMAN • ALVAH BESSIE • W. E. B. DuBOIS R. PALME DUTT • PHILIP EVERGOOD • SENDER GARLIN • BARBARA GILES • ROBERT GWATHMEY • ROCKWELL KENT • ALFRED KREYMBORG • JOHN HOWARD LAWSON • MERIDEL LE SUEUR • VITO MARCANTONIO • LEWIS MERRILL • PABLO NERUDA • ANTON REFREGIER • PAUL ROBESON • HOWARD SELSAM • ISIDOR SCHNEIDER • SAMUEL SILLEN • JAMES TURNBULL • CHARLES WHITE • DOXEY WILKERSON.**



San Francisco: A Half Step Richard Lyons . . . 3
Valery: High Priest of "Pure Poetry" Jean Larnac 4
Baruch and Gromyko: an editorial John Stuart . . 9
Crusading Congressman Benjamin J. Davis, Jr. . 10
Gropper's Cartoon . . . . . 13
Barcelona: 1938: a short story Tom Ray . . . 14
The ABC of Socialism Ralph Bowman . . . . 18
Mail Call . . . . . 20
Book Reviews . . . . . 22
Films Thomas McGrath, Betty Millard . . . . 28
Records S. Finkelstein . . . . . 30



Two weeks' notice is requested for change of address. Notification sent to NEW MASSES rather than the Post Office will give the best results. Vol. LX, No. 1. Published by THE NEW MASSES, INC., 104 East Ninth Street, New York 3, N. Y.


Copyright 1946, THE NEW MASSES, INC. Reg. U. S. Patent Office. Washington Office, 802 F St. NW, Room 28. Drawings and text may not be reprinted without permission.


Entered as second-class matter, June 23, 1926, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Single copies 15 cents. Subscriptions $6.00 a year in U. S. and Possessions and Mexico; six months $3.50; three months $2.00. Foreign, $7.00 a year; six months $4.00; three months, $2.25. In Canada $6.50 a year, $4.00 for six months, U. S. money; single copies in Canada 20 cents Canadian money. NEW MASSES welcomes the work of new writers and artists. Manuscripts and drawings must be accompanied by stamped, addressed envelope.





PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

# SAN FRANCISCO: A HALF STEP

## By Richard Lyons

I

*If the step were not being taken, if the stumbling-forward ache were not alive, the bombs would not fall, the throats would not be cut.*

JOHN STEINBECK.

This is the sack-cloth century
And the hour of abominations,
When, thrashing in delirium,
The impotent-bled nations
Reach hungrily for a crust
Of freedom in the hot salt dust

Thrown coldly to them by the sabre-toothed
Minds guarding a cold pleistocene
Existence in an age that's changing,
Ripping in hate and a green
Jealousy the world's raw flesh,
Licking with dripping mouths the fresh

New blood of efforts to be free.
What is left to say to them
Who have no fear of war? It does
Not signify. Though they condemn
The earth, still wet with sticky mud,
(If profitable) to a bath of blood,

It does not signify. The wolves
Are howling in the night, preying
Upon the doctors of the soul.
The frenzy rises at the graying
East. It does not signify
That there is death if those who die

Are economical about it.
The open sore of years still bleeds
Hot acid on the small of earth
Who try to quench their thirst with creeds;
And corner-of-the-mouth intrigues
Still make the laws of human leagues.

And the habit sends men rooting
In the sad and still warm ashes
Of the dead who died believing,
Not as they that where the cash is
God is, but that in his soul
Is man enfranchised and made whole.



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

II

*I must tell them at the office that they don't sell enough oil in Spain.*

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER in *The Middle Span.*

Now that the charter is signed and the names are affixed
In numerical order without regard to prestige,
Now that the charter is signed, the grievances put
Aside for a time behind the flowering smiles,
And shaking hands,

What have the backroom boys, in the midst of the shouting,
In mind, now that the charter is signed, the raw hands clasped
Feebly but clasped in a timid embrace but embraced?
What have the deadpan wiseguys undersigned
For enterprise-sake?

To whose account do we charge the treaties of business?
How is the medicine death that we poured down the throats
Of the living to cure the old complex of war related
To terms of contracts written in the Esperanto
Of economics?

Now that the charter is signed, while the ink still glistens
Is it time so soon to shelve our contempt for the makers
Of war since the makers of war are the makers of money
And the first million dollars is only the first and the hardest,
The second comes easy?

Are business engineers and the makers of business
Citizens of a world, whose right hands join
Above the distinctions that nations throw up against nations
While left hands stir, immune from the mass, the chaos
Of angers and hates?

We've seen the statistics, we know the ambiguous ways
Of good business, the virtue of profit and loss and the logic.
But a balance of profit is breeding a balance of hate,
And mechanical masters raise over graves that are warm
A column of coins.

Now that the charter is signed, in the delicate pause,
Down by the harbor of state, the fat old rats,
Used to the comings and goings of peace, under wharves
Gnaw the tough ropes and pause, turn and sniff, and pause
And turn again to gnaw.

III

*Perhaps the little thing that says "I" is missing out of the middle of their heads and then it's a waste of time to blame them.*

E. M. FORSTER.

Up the springtime of a new belief
Enfranchising waves of thought roll warmly.
But on the beach of old
Nonentity fat lizards, strangers
To the feel of blood, watch, in their eager
Gathering of cold

Stones, with jealous eyes the strange tide
Rising in the mind and hiss and slither,
Crying that evolution
Is a heresy of propagating fish,
Then wipe the ocean from their scales and practice breathing.
Nevertheless the ocean

Spills continually upon their privileged sand
Theory after theory of radical Nature,
And a radical sun
Pours heat upon the land without distinction
Until their cold minds in their cold shells heat
And hate creation.

From their red mouths come the old forked
Arguments that used to mean, but the new
Species in the hills,
"That cannot be because it has not been,"
Looks down upon the scurrying beach and laughs,
The laugh that kills.

# VALERY: HIGH-PRIEST OF "PURE POETRY"

***"A Narcissus leaning over the limpid pool, he does not even see the tinted clouds gliding through the waves—he looks only at himself."***

## By JEAN LARNAC

*We publish this critique of the thought and poetry of Paul Valery to help stimulate a reexamination of the premises from which various trends in modern literature spring. The cult of "pure poetry," of the mind wrapped in admiring contemplation of itself, owes much of its ritual to the Frenchman Valery, who is best known to American readers for his two volumes of essays, entitled "Variety," and whose occasional translated poems were eagerly studied by young writers. He died July 20, 1945.*

*Valery is the Druid of those younger poets to whom "everything human became alien," and who today still pursue beauties so rare and elusive that the reader can hope to grasp only part of them.*

STRANGE adventure! In 1894, a young man of twenty-three who had published poems in "little" magazines like *La Conque* and *Le Centaure*, came from Montpellier to Paris in search of fame. He was introduced to literary circles, invited to the dinners of the *Mercure de France*, and—rarer honor—was a guest at the Tuesday afternoons of the poet Mal-



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

larme. . . . Then—mystery of the poet's calling—following the example of Racine, Rimbaud, and Leon Dierx, he abandoned literature so completely that he could assert he had forgotten all his poems.

Despite appearances, however, Paul Valery had not really renounced his youthful ambitions; for in the midst of World War I, while millions of men fought to defend far-flung interests and seemed fated to remain indifferent to lyric poetry, he attracted the attention of readers who were looking for non-contemporary themes by publishing one after another *Jeune Parque, Odes, Cimetiere Marin, Le Serpent* and, with the return of peace, *Charmes*. Then fame, which a quarter of a century earlier had been denied the aspiring young man who had come to Paris from the heaths of Languedoc, was heaped on the disillusioned writer of fifty—a fame the like of which no other French poet had known since the start of the century. He was elected to the French Academy. Editors of magazines and de luxe editions fought over his slightest fragments. Book-sellers hunted avidly for his autographs. He was endowed by several important foundations, played a leading role in organizations for intellectual cooperation, directed the Center of Mediterranean Studies, and was named professor at the College de France.

Not only did lovers of literature look upon him as a master; professional philosophers came to him for guidance. At the request of Leon Brunschvieg, he expounded his ideas on inspiration before members of the Philosophical Society. At universities, in artistic circles, in society, everywhere he was listened to with reverent attention. He was France's official poet in the period between World Wars.

If, according to the phrase of Madame de Stael, "literature is the expression of society," how ignore such an adventure? Victor Hugo was hailed as a great poet in the nineteenth century only because he had been its "sonorous echo." Had he been a little behind the times in his conceptions, the critics would have neglected him. Had he been too bold, he would have suffered the fate of Stendhal and Baudelaire, who were misunderstood by their contemporaries. Having won almost as many honors as Hugo, did not Valery have to express the spirit of his time? At least that of its ruling class, since by contrast with the author of *Pauvres Gens* and *Les Miserables*, he had no influence on the people. By examining his works we may be able to discern some of the tendencies which guided the French bourgeoisie from 1920 to 1940.

In less than a century—from Alfred de Musset to Paul Valery—the poet has curiously changed his appearance and habits. One of the first portraits sketched of the young contributor to *La Conque* and *Le Centaure* after his arrival in Paris shows him in his room on the Rue Gay-Lussac standing before a blackboard covered with figures. No more dreaming in the moonlight, no more midnight chats with the Muse, no more despairing loves. The strange young man does not haunt the popular dance-halls to leer at the *grisettes*. He does not know the delights of absinthe. He seems to know but one intoxication, that induced by exact and subtle mathematical relations. The problems which torment him demand figures and formulas for their solution. Is this not a rather intriguing and even attractive situation? One thinks of Faust stubbornly glued to his laboratory, of lonely Descartes, of Balthasar Cloes, of all the seekers after the Absolute. This never-boastful meridional who, while yet a boy on the docks at Sete, dreamed of becoming a sailor, was not one of those who supinely accepted what life offered him and kept on rehashing other people's ideas until the end of his days. "The opinions of people who have not remade their minds according to their real needs and true powers," he wrote in *Choses Tues* (Things Unsaid), "have no qualitative importance."

Unfortunately this self-effort, which could have made a Descartes or a Lenin of him, led him only to the most inhuman loneliness. For not only did he deny everything that study and experience had taught him, but at the very moment he laid the foundation of his intellectual structure, after asserting: *Cogito* (I think), he refused to go further and draw the logical consequence of this truth: *Ergo sum* (therefore I am). He thinks: yes, the fact appears irrefutable—and yet: "What is this *Cogito?*" he asks in his *Cahier B.*, "at most the translation of an untranslatable state." Who is bold enough to dare maintain that thought alone suffices to affirm existence? After all, what does it matter to Valery *that he is?* To him it is enough to think. In this same *Cahier B.* he notes: "If, when the thinker speaks of *being*, one could see exactly what he thinks at that moment, instead of philosophy what would one find?"

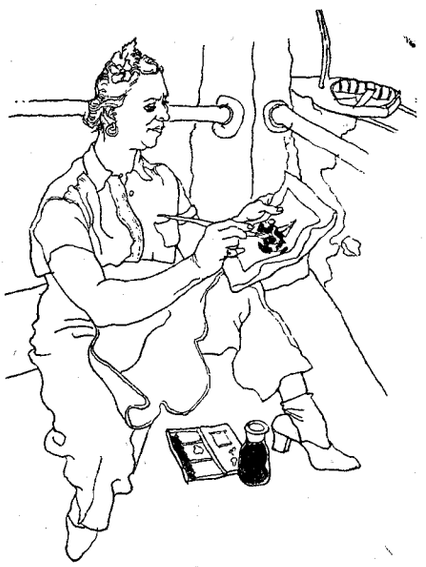
So nothing interests him save the pleasure of proving, according to the dictates of reason, an architecture of relations which can be indefinitely recommenced, like the motion of the waves. He sets his thought in movement to see it trace various curves in space, but he asks of it no revelation of the world; he expects from it nothing but a delightful and incommunicable voluptuousness. When at times his mind grows impassioned and moves along the paths of life, risks taking a stand, he brings it quickly back to exercises in algebra: "I could only think with disgust of all the ideas and sentiments which are created or stimulated in man by his ills and fears," says Valery's Monsieur Teste.

This strange thinker irked by matter and his closed field of space and time—one wonders on what he was nourished. He disregarded the ever-changing spectacles which the

R. Dubin.



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Ernie Jaediker.

universe offered him; in the words of Theophile Gautier, he mirrored them "without interest in his cold eyes." One day he was traveling in Hungary with Georges Duhamel when a friend led them to the top of a hill from which they could see the valley of the Danube spread out before them. Valery gave a weary glance, then turned toward his colleague who was lost in admiration and said: "My dear fellow, everywhere they show me the same landscape."* Thus, impervious to the picturesque, blind to daily realities, he put aside everything that could distract him in his secret quest. "The more intelligent a man is," he asserted in *Moralites*, "the more stupid things and events seem to him."

Humanity itself, on which for centuries the great classicists concentrated their attention, does not interest him. For how is one to know man from his outward traits and statements? The senses undoubtedly bring us illusory revelations. "A really *accurate* mind," we read in *Choses Tues*, "can only understand *itself*, and in certain states." One could dwell at length on this assertion, which denies all possibility of objective knowledge. Let us simply say at this point that it reveals a fiercely egotistical will, in which the historian perceives not only the revolt of the individual against the group but the social desertion of an entire class. At a time when the democratic spirit was spreading throughout the world and especially in France, is it not striking that writers as different as Maurice Barres (in his first period), Gide, Proust and Valery saw salvation in this withdrawal into self? Was not the Narcissism they made fashionable one of the last refuges of the aristocratic spirit? In the final phase of its evolution, the patrician class—in which, it is worth noting, these four writers were born—believing that it can no longer receive anything worthwhile from men, draws apart from them and finds a subtle pleasure in inner analysis, untroubled by outside disturbances. Neither economic necessities (which they scarcely feel), nor pity, nor love draws these passionate devotees of self-worship (*le culte du moi*) outside themselves. Andre Gide himself, who in his works has devoted so much space to desire, has known only grasping love—love that takes and has nothing to offer, a mere quest for sensual pleasure.

* Quoted by Duhamel in *Les Nouvelles Litteraires*, July 26, 1945.

But more than Gide, more than any other disciple of Henri Brulard, Valery delighted in the prison of his soul. A Narcissus leaning over the limpid pool, he does not even see the tinted clouds gliding through the waves nor the resulting foliage nor the nymph who timidly watches him—he looks only at himself, the image of himself, the image of an image perhaps, a reflection of a reflection. And he restricts his angle of vision as he pleases. Neither his body nor even his heart concerns him. Strangely devoid of flesh and blood, he turns away with horror from the muscular, visceral, glandular, even the nervous life. All that smacks too much of the slaughterhouse. So in a century long past Madeleine de Scudery and her friends haughtily avoided the word "breast," leaving it to their kitchenmaids. (Later on, we shall analyze Valery's preciosity.) Even sensitivity is repugnant to him. More than the Parnassian poets who assailed the Romantics for having exposed their sufferings for the "vulgar plebians" to feed on, more even than the delicate Mallarme, he forbade himself to offer us the least of his enthusiasms. And undoubtedly he refused as much as he could to experience any such enthusiasms. "His heart is a desert island," said Madame Teste, speaking of her husband. Too many roots cause emotions, sentiments, passions to grow in the human organism. Like perspiration and everything else originating in the endocrine glands, states of sensitivity belong to an inferior mode of life—on which the thinker turns his back with a pout of disgust.

Valery would like himself to be pure spirit; and he would like his readers to be pure spirits. "To write and work only for those on whom insults and praise have no hold, who are not moved or impressed by fashion, authority, violence, and all the external attributes," that is the program he elaborated for himself in *Rhumbs*. How he scorns the apparatus of tears! One would think he feared to soil his fingers in its mechanism. "How strange it is," he marvels in *Analecta*, "to have machines for joy and sadness, organs of impotence to sustain a thought! Compensatory mechanisms, safety-valves for energy, which itself corresponds to undigested, untenable, and unfinished images." He upbraids man for having paid so much attention to the life of the senses, for having exalted the vagueness of passions, melancholy and intoxication. He writes: "Man has dignified his lack of adaptation, the difficulties and inaccuracies of his adjustments, the accidents and impressions which make him pronounce the word: irrational. In them he has discovered depths and that bizarre product, melancholy. The height of the human is that man has grown fond of it: search for emotion, manufacture of emotion, desire to lose one's head and to let it be lost, to trouble and to be troubled."

In sum, one activity alone concerns this intellectual enamored of unalloyed thought: that of his conscience which he would allow to feed only on itself. To think of one's self, or rather to observe one's self—thinking without paying any attention to the world—this is the impossible wager he would like to win. More aristocratic than the Barnabooth of Larbaud, the millionaire disgusted with pleasures that can be bought; more artistic than Huysman's des Esseintes, Monsieur Teste imprisons himself in the most immaterial of palaces, where no one save himself can enter. And he refuses entry to the least impure of his emotions. Strange ideal, that of a thought which is meditated without borrowing the slightest elements from the universe:

*Midi la-haut, Midi sans mouvement*
*En soi se pense et convient a soi-meme.*
(Noon up there, motionless noon,



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Thinks within itself and is sufficient unto itself.)

Would one not say that the philosopher who conceived this chimerical desire hoped to escape a life of disappointments and the heavy toll of economic, political and mundane necessities? One would like to know what despair led him to this lucid madness, what cruel disillusionments when as an individual he first faced society. He who does not obtain the position he thinks he deserves and cannot win it makes a place for himself apart, a unique place in the secret recesses of himself from which at times, alas! he can no longer emerge, and which forces him to stand aside from the community of human beings. But rarely does a writer go to the very end of this dramatic adventure: the page he writes serves as an escape-valve, opens the world to him at the very moment he thought himself definitively excluded from it.

To brush aside the universe of sensations, emotions, sentiments and passions in order to devote oneself to the study of one's Ego, and then to perceive that this Ego escapes the keenest insight, disintegrating before the light from within—is that not tantamount to a botched life? Valery denied man, the social being, in order to remain *only* an individual. Then he denied this individual's animality and sensitivity to know *only* his essence. And this essence, in sum, dissolved before his inward look. One understands therefore these words which are, in a sense, born of despair: "If the soul had complete power at a given moment, we would perish the very next moment."

Image of Valery's consciousness, the *Jeune Parque* looks at herself, grows weary, falls asleep, and awakens only to weep. She no longer knows whether she lives or dreams: the images reflected in mirrors which she constantly watches have caused her hypnosis and disgust. Dante did not forsee this punishment of the thinker devouring himself. Introspection when it is unaccompanied by a taste for action, as in the case of Stendhal, can become the most hellish torment: research for the sake of research, aimless research which dooms the thinker to become the Wandering Jew of his thought. By a curious need of self-denial, by excess of scruples, Valery condemned himself to this and, with amazing masochism, took pleasure in it: "I am truly possessed of an unhappy spirit which is never very sure of having understood what it understood, without perceiving it. Without reflection, I distinguish with difficulty what is clear from what is definitely obscure; I suspect all words, for the slightest meditation makes it absurd to put one's trust in them." Of all the thinkers obsessed with a critical spirit, he appears the most tortured and at the same time the most bent on devouring himself. Even as he points to "the relationship between suffering and the questioning attitude," he wants no other state of mind. What a pathetic contradiction!

Since thought seems valueless, only one creative act appears valid: the work of art, a gratuitous act, absolutely useless apart from the joy it gives the artist and on the rebound, though in an attenuated form, the reader, spectator or audience. The act of a woman giving birth to her child, of a bricklayer building a wall, of a gardener planting his vegetables, of a revolutionary building a new world, the act of charity which Pascal placed above all else—these things Valery disregards. They concern a negligible universe from which he turns aside in disdain. "After having found Nothingness," the poet Mallarme wrote to Cazalis in July 1866, "I found beauty." We do not know whether the order of discovery was the same in Mallarme's disciple, Valery; but a man who has discovered Nothingness in man's consciousness—a crystal so pure that, reduced to itself, it reflects nothing—and who refuses to get outside himself, can only find a reason for living in esthetic pleasure. Since he knows he can say nothing seriously without arousing the smile of the skeptic, he has only one course left: to become a word-charmer. As he invents words or watches them come alive in the recesses of his consciousness, he establishes the most rarified associations and expresses them in images, specially chosen rhythms and "precious" phrases. Almost immediately he forsakes traditional poetry, too often discursive and didactic, in favor of music. "Poetry has the honor of being preferred to prose, only to be sacrificed to music," the author of *Charmes* confessed to the essayist, Alain, who was writing a commentary on Valery's work.

So long as an immutable value is not given to every word, language will indeed lack clarity and precision. Such as they are, rough symbols of primitive thought handed down from early ages and polished by succeeding generations, words are living, almost monstrous things which terrify the thinker. He

Jaediker.



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

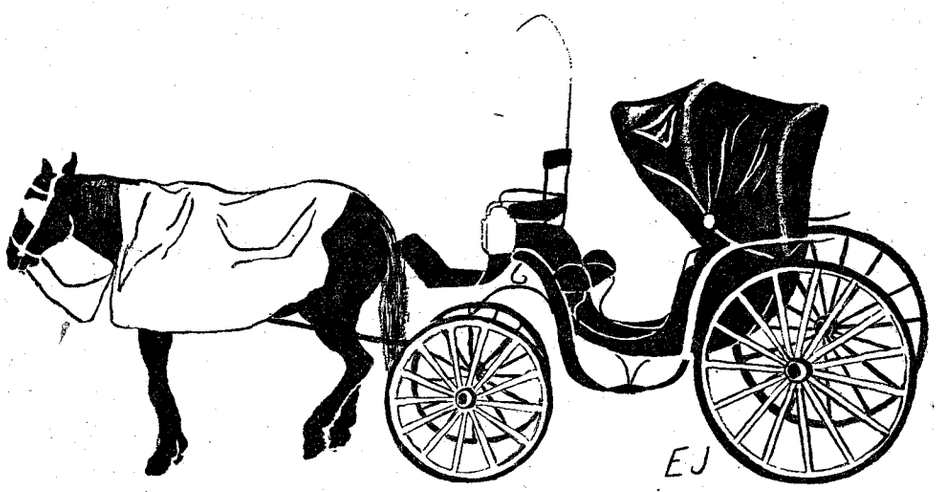
curses the flexibility of their meanings, their deftness in fleeing the straitjacket of thought. But how would one express the infinite possible number of spiritual conceptions with the thirty-five thousand words in the dictionary, even with a hundred thousand or more, if each of them is not adapted to fill the gap separating it from its neighbors? This plasticity, this many-coloredness of words, which is heartbreaking to the rigorous-minded philosopher, attracts the artist. Couched in too simple a formula, the furtive idea he has just caught appears only as an awkward and schematic rendition, a faded flower. By conjuring up a swarm of images around elementary words and awakening a host of echoes, music-laden poetry expresses much better the rustling of the idea discerned in the twilight of one's mind. Tricks of melody and rhythm illuminate everything that the word, in its banality, could not pluck from the depths of the ego. Even syntax, according to Mallarme's theory, by curious convolutions and a complicated system of sequences, creates phrases capable of expressing the most untranslatable states.

In this need to remake everything and this dissatisfaction with the commonplace, which characterizes Valery's poet as well as thinker, we would see something great and Promethean, if we were not warned that a work of art has no revolutionary significance. "To me," as Valery explains in his preface to the *Spiritual Songs* of San Juan de la Cruz, "poetry should be the paradise of language, in which the different virtues of this transcendent faculty (disjointed in their use, but as strange to each other as feeling is to intelligence and as the immediate power of sound is to sustained thought) can and should constitute and form, for a time, an alliance as intimate as that of the body and the soul." Paradise of language! And not paradise of thought fusing with feeling in an attempt at integrated knowledge. Poetry, which some think apt at revealing the most secret relations of man and the universe, is reduced to a simple play of words; and Valery here joins the sixteenth century poet Malherbe, who made the poet a mere bowls-player.

But he wants this play of words to be so complex that he does not conceive of the possibility of poetic prose or even of free verse. To get rid of a rule would mean a return to simplicity: that is, in the final analysis, to banality. The rhythm of formal verse and the timbre of rhyme are indispensable if poetry is to steer a middle course between clumsy, everyday language and the divine incantation of sounds. To achieve music without abandoning the mysterious sparks produced by the clash of semantic values—that is the aim of the poet for whom music is "the brilliant fire from which all arts are born." Hence he is forced to work with extreme care and, from association to association, finds himself drawn toward hitherto unsuspected architectures. "Versifying," writes Valery in *Rhumbs*, forces one "to consider from a very high level what one should say." From so high a level that one forgets what he wanted to say! Lured by the curious algebra of his art, he goes from formula to formula until he reaches unknown regions. Like a superb billiard-player who never plays with words without producing an effect, he obtains from words, formless instruments of intellectual communication, an astonishing symphony which no one, not even himself, could foresee.

But the listener who seeks to unravel the meaning is stupid indeed! Pure poetry has no meaning. The poet distills certain states of his soul for pleasure; he does not pretend to communicate them to anyone else. Only fools look on poetry as a language to which the dictionary holds the key. Initiates know that in its fullness it can only be the language of self to self! "My poems have the meaning attributed to then," Valery blandly asserts, criticizing a professional philosopher like Alain and a literary historian like Gustave Cohen for having sought to discern the lesson of his poems. To attempt to dissociate content from form is foolish pedantry, since a poem constitutes an inseparable whole. "If people realized all the research involved in the creation or adoption of a form," he declares in *Litterature*, "they would never stupidly counterpose it to content." Poetry does not contain ideas capable of being expressed in a commonplace form; and, like a page of a musical score, it cannot be translated into prose. Who first thought up "the absurd classroom exercise of putting verses into prose?" Scholars gravely discuss whether the celebrated sun in *Cimetiere Marin* represents man's conscience or the ever-flowing sea. The witty Valery smiles because he only tried to bring together curious amalgams, an inlay of images, rhythms, sounds and turns of phrase. "What is form for others," he writes in his *Calepin d'un Poete*, "is content for me."

*(The second half of M. Larnac's essay will appear next week. The whole is translated from the French by John Rossi.)*




Jaediker.



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# BARUCH AND GROMYKO

## An Editorial by JOHN STUART

All thinking about the control of atomic energy and the lethal weapons derived from it suffers seriously if it is done in a vacuum, away from the real issues confronting the world. Blueprints and proposals must, therefore, meet simple tests — tests which no one in particular has devised but are tossed in our laps by the fact that there are those who profit from war and many more who gain nothing from it but the quiet of the graveyard. When we talk about harnessing the atom's furies we are actually talking about politics, and when we reach the realm of politics we have reached into the core of the problem. If anyone believes that at this stage the atom is anything separate and apart from world politics he is living in an environment of fantasy in which, let us say, good little girls are made of sugar and spice and everything nice.

Politics, then, is our point of departure in managing the atom. And all politics can be reduced roughly to two categories: there are the politics that make for war and those that make for its avoidance. Stated in another way and in terms of the discussions held within the UN's Atomic Energy Commission, we come quickly to the conclusion that the atom of itself is no cause of war but an element, albeit mighty and unprecedented, in the play of forces in international policy. And as I see it the Atomic Commission will be writing a chapter of major importance to the world's future; but in Paris, simultaneously, another chapter is being written which is part of the same book. There the scene is far from comforting, and whatever Mr. Byrnes is doing cannot be thought of as having nothing to do with what Mr. Baruch proposed in the Bronx. Our aggressive proponent of free, dog-eat-dog enterprise and private charity (I base these adjectives on a speech Mr. Baruch made in Washington last February 24) may use more honeyed phrases, may even paraphrase Abraham Lincoln; but in the end he is the spokesman of Wall Street *ueber alles*, of a government which wars on its own workers, lends money to a decadent and stifling empire regime in London, and trains corrupt, reactionary-led armies in China. This is the politics that leads to war with or without atom bombs.

It is true that an international convention to abolish the use of the bomb and to release the atom's energy for the common welfare would have a certain beneficial effect on world relations. But such a convention or agreement cannot be based on the United States' setting itself up as the last and decisive arbiter of whether the agreement is satisfactory before it will reveal what it knows about the atom or destroy its atom-bomb stockpile. Let us suppose that another country was the sole possessor of the bomb and said to the rest of the world, "You must fit into our plans, into our way of doing things, into our conception of what is right and wrong, otherwise we retain this new pistol and use it in our diplomacy until you bend your knees before us." This is nothing short of coercion and would create a howl of protest in America which even the dead would hear. Yet Mr. Baruch said as much in his speech to the Atomic Commission.

For a man so eager to destroy the veto rights provided in the United Nations Charter — rights designed to make certain unanimous action by the Security Council's permanent members—he proposes in effect that America have the sole power of veto. This is what I mean when I say there is a connection between the bulldozing politics Mr. Byrnes practices in Paris and those pursued here by Mr. Baruch. Holding on to almost all the atom aces, Mr. Baruch deals cards which will bring him the pot. Furthermore, this game is not to be viewed merely as it relates to the use of the atom bomb. It is an effort to violate the United Nations Charter, revise its strongest features for safeguarding peace, and in the end resort to a League of Nations procedure which did not prevent war but paved the way to it. Mr. Baruch, in the long run, would make his International Atomic Development Authority supersede the Security Council; and the unanimity of the Big Five called for in the Charter—another way of guaranteeing their continued cooperation on all questions of substance including sanctions—would evaporate like dew on a hot summer day.

The aim of destroying the veto power may have other motives, not yet clear. For the United States, non-veto procedure may make it easier for the country's monopolists to reduce the competition which may come about as a result of other states' using atomic energy to increase their productive capacity or develop their resources. To the monopolists' discomfort, too many scientists are agreed that it is only a matter of a few years before atomic power plants can be constructed and operated in areas of the world where there are none or which have only limited sources of energy. Even the deserts will become lush and yielding. The atom has within it the means of bringing a tremendous leap forward in the improvement of the world's living standards, and this will not be to the liking of the imperialists, whose whole system is dependent on restricting production, on cheap labor, on keeping backward areas in their semi-feudal state.

A plan for the distribution and sharing of atomic knowledge, for the abolition of the bomb, must be based not alone on one country's interests, or on the attempt of one government to impose its will on the rest of the world. This is an issue which will, as the discussions develop in the UN, reveal the forces dividing the world as well as those forces trying to keep it together for a future unlike the past. The proposals offered by the Soviet delegate, Andrei Gromyko, are not based on hindering the cooperation of the leading powers, they are not based on an effort to take advantage of industrial strength, nor are they hedged in with sinister conditions which the other powers must meet before the Soviets will go along fully. Mr. Gromyko has said his country proposes, without violating the terms of the Charter, the abolition of the bomb—not at some vague date in the future, but within ninety days after agreement has been reached.

But then again, Mr. Gromyko does not have a fortune made in stock market speculation or in the exploitation of the labor of others. He represents the land of socialism.



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# CRUSADING CONGRESSMAN

***From pulpit and platform A. Clayton Powell Jr. promotes unity of the Negro people and labor.***

**By BENJAMIN J. DAVIS, JR.**

THE ghetto existence of the Negro people in Harlem was at its worst during the bleak depression days of 1929-1935. Unemployment, starvation and misery were doubly felt by Negro communities which suffered the additional afflictions of Jim Crow, discrimination and segregation. The Negroes and their organizations fought back resolutely; it was the Communist Party, in Harlem and elsewhere, that provided the dynamic leadership and clarity which gave a sharp edge to these struggles.

In this situation the Negro people—with Harlem as no exception—demanded a new type of leadership. There began the twilight of the "Uncle Tom" leaders, those who would sell their people down the river in return for a few crumbs from the white ruling class. Instead, the Negro people began to look for leadership to labor, to their own oppressed ranks and to those who identified themselves with the masses. In the hot crucible of struggle there began to be forged the new political maturity of the Negro people, a process which continues to this day.

In Harlem, as in other Negro communities, many aspirants for this new type of leadership were projected to the surface. Some were genuine; others were opportunistic, hoping to ride this militant trend to their own personal advancement. Among the former there was a young Negro minister, born of middle-class parents, who has since become, at the age of thirty-six, the first Negro Congressman from Harlem. Together with Reps. Vito Marcantonio, Hugh DeLacey and others, he is part of the staunch core of progressives in the House.

Adam Clayton Powell identified himself during the Hoover depression days with the Negroes as a people, as the most oppressed common men of America. A forceful and dramatic orator, the main source of his strength is his association with the cause of the masses, whose picturesque language he speaks and whose just grievances he powerfully articulates. Consequently, the forces of reaction and fascism in this country have long tried to "get him," and are now seeking to defeat him in the 1946 Congressional elections, hoping in this manner to deal a blow to the Negro people and all their anti-fascist supporters.

From the pulpit of his church, no less than from the public platform, Representative Powell has preached the unity of the Negro people, their collaboration with the labor movement, and the necessity of unity between the "new Negro and the new white man" for the achievement of democracy and freedom among all races, colors, creeds and nationalities throughout the world. Notwithstanding increasingly heavy pressure, he has stood his ground against Red-baiting, recognizing this Hitlerite weapon as a danger to the unity of the labor and progressive movement, and to the cause of the Negro in particular. He has related the struggles of the Negro and the fate of



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

American democracy to the interests of the colonial and oppressed peoples and he did much to rally the Negro people and other Americans to the banner of anti-fascism in World War II.

In addition to being a member of Congress and pastor of Abyssinian Baptist Church, the largest Protestant church in America, Rep. Powell is editor-in-chief and co-publisher of *The People's Voice,* the most consistently progressive Negro weekly in the country. In all three positions, his virile anti-fascist convictions are evident. As a symbol of the unity of the Negro people, he swept all three primaries in the Congressional campaign of 1944—the Republican, Democratic and American Labor Party—the first time this has happened in a Negro electoral community and one of the rare occasions it has occurred anywhere.

WITH a record such as this, Adam Powell's first book, *Marching Blacks,** in which he expounds his views on the struggle for Negro rights, deserves serious attention. His dedication is to "freedom fighters" at home and abroad, "black and white, Jew and Gentile, Catholic and Protestant." The book reflects the strength and potentialities of his leadership, as well as its weaknesses and limitations. Yet one is not to be mechanically balanced off against the other. The book should be approached positively; for it is manifestly written out of a passion for the free and equal citizenship of Negro Americans. It is a scathing indictment of the pattern of white supremacy which blights the nation and imposes special proscriptions upon the Negro. The book captures the militant mood of the Negro people, traces in broad outlines their march for freedom over the years and proclaims their determination to continue marching until full liberation is won. It is a call to unity among Negroes irrespective of class and caste. And it links the cause of the Negro with the fight against anti-Semitism, labor-baiting and Red-baiting.

There are moving passages in the book, but it is also quite spotty and erratic. Precision of thought is sometimes unnecessarily sacrificed for rhetorical effect or emphasis. In places it gives the impression of having been too hastily put together. Errors sometimes go deeper than mere formulation. For example, Representative Powell's castigation of the anti-Negro and generally reactionary policies of the AFL leadership is unquestionably correct. But the solution is hardly a suicidal "showdown between the AFL and the CIO"—which is the fond dream of the monopoly capitalists who would like to destroy the CIO as well as the AFL. It is the policies of the AFL leadership which must be defeated, and that can be done only through the mobilization of the membership for progressive policies. The key is the fight for the unity of AFL and CIO on the basis of a progressive program with respect to the interests of labor, the Negro people and the welfare of the country.

The collaboration of the Negro people with the labor movement is not a transient garment to be discarded at will by either party. Unconditional citizenship of the Negro people can be won only if this collaboration is recognized as indispensable and of a permanent character. In point of time, this unconditional citizenship will be achieved in proportion to the intensification and conscious strengthening of the alliance between the Negro people and the labor movement, in which the unity of Negro and white workers is the core. Indeed, the working class bears the highest destiny of the Negro and all other subject peoples.

Rep. Powell, unfortunately, does not complete the logic of the pro-labor character of the book, nor does he see the full implications of the Negro-labor relationship. There is a tendency to consider the Negro's plight as an isolated "race" question. On this point, the book appears to have been influenced somewhat by Gunnar Myrdal's *American Dilemma*—which is quoted on more than one occasion—and which harbors the mystical and reactionary idea that the Negro needs no allies in his struggles for justice. This idea is a menace to the whole cause of the Negro, for that cause today requires that the Negro have all possible allies—and above all, labor.

Estimating the Scottsboro case as "the emergence of Communism as a power fighting for the rights of poor people," and declaring that there is "no group in America . . . that practices racial brotherhood one-tenth as much as the Communist Party," the author confirms his oft-expressed appreciation of the positive role of the Communist Party in the fight for Negro rights and for the common people. Despite his basic misconceptions on many aspects of Marxism, he evidences a broad understanding of the merited place of Communists in the democratic coalition of labor and the people. It is indeed one of the tragedies of the anti-fascist struggle that so few men in high places who, like Rep. Powell, are not members of the Communist Party, have had the courage to speak the truth about Communists and their historic contributions to American democracy!

AS A solution to the problem of the centuries-old oppression of the Negro people, Representative Powell proposes mass migration of the Negroes from the South. "The people must move—and *now!* This is the only answer to the South's inhumanity to man," the book states.

In my opinion, this proposal is un-

**"Poor old Murchison—they caught him developing some serums to cure people."**

* MARCHING BLACKS, *by Adam Clayton Powell. Dial.* $2.50.



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sound and divisive. Although the author would limit the migration to those sections of the South where no progressive changes have taken place, this relatively infinitesmal modification does not render this plan any more palatable.

Credit must be given the author, however, for seeing that lynch terror against the Negro people in the South would increase after the war (his book was written before V-J Day). Indeed, this terror has burst forth in Columbia, Tenn., and elsewhere, directed principally against Negro veterans, vanguard in the Negroes' struggle for the Four Freedoms. This, of course, requires emergency measures to defend the elementary rights of the Negro people and of the Negro veterans in particular. Every section of the country should in its own interest give more consideration and aid to the people of the South. United Negro and white pressure directed at federal, state and local authorities can bring results. Above all, the CIO's organizational drive in the South should receive the broadest support of the Negro people nationally as the backbone of the fight to combat reaction and fascist practices in the South incited by the Bilbos, Eastlands and Rankins. A national official of the CIO has already declared that this drive is not only to raise wages and organize the unorganized but to "combat Ku Kluxism."

The recent increased terror against Negroes must be considered in relation to the drive of American imperialism—with the Truman administration as its spokesman and supported by the Vandenberg Republicans — to hurl this country into World War III against the Soviet Union. American monopoly capital, with Britain as the junior partner, is out to dominate the earth. Unless this immediate imperialist scheme is smashed, disaster for our country and fascist or near-fascist suppression of labor, minorities and democratic forces at home will be the logical developments. Manifestly, migration is no solution to this danger, which hovers over every section of the country, threatening Negro and white alike. Negroes could not enjoy freedom in a world wracked with imperialist, atomic war, under conditions of fascism or near fascism in our own country.

Mass migration of the 9,000,000 Negroes of the South is obviously impracticable. Even if it were feasible, it would not end the lynch rule of the poll taxers in the South. Nor would it reduce their strategic legislative power in Washington over the whole nation. However, it seems to me that the fundamental reasons for the unsoundness of the "solution" put forward in *Marching Blacks* are as follows:

1. It would divert the Negroes in the South from the fight, in unity with the white workers and poor farmers, for elementary democracy and economic salvation. It is, in reality, defeatist, and would surrender the battle against the fascist Bilbos, Rankins and Eastlands in their political stronghold where they must be combatted most tenaciously. It would mean voluntarily withdrawing from the main battleground of political reaction the anti-fascist Negro population who constitute —as they did during the Reconstruction days—a most powerful force for the democratization of the South, and therefore of America. It would result in the abandonment of certain beachheads established over the last years from which Southern Negroes and whites are attacking the citadels of poll-taxdom.

2. It plays into the hands of sundry proposals of certain reactionaries and pro-fascists to deport Negro Americans, proposals which aim to incite the white masses to wholesale lynch terror against the Negro people.

3. It denies the basic truth that the national oppression of the Negro throughout America stems from monopoly capital and that its reactionary, anti-Negro rule is becoming ever more acute in the North. Consider the fascist killing of Charles and Alfonzo Ferguson in Freeport, L. I., twenty-four miles from liberal New York City. Migration to the North would not guarantee the free citizenship of the migrants, since the Negroes in the North do not yet have equal citizenship, although there are marked differences between conditions in the South and those in the North. But certainly no more reliance can be placed upon the rule of monopoly capital in the North than in the South. Any proposal which tends, to any degree, to induce such reliance is against the fundamental interests of the struggle for Negro rights.

THE only method through which the ills of the Negro can be solved is through struggle, in unison with labor and the progressive movement, against reactionary monopoly capital, particular against its most barbarous effects in the South. But not until socialism, when the entire character of our social system will be changed, will the guarantee of the Negro's free and equal citizenship be irrevocably established. This is true even though socialism is not the issue in our country at this moment—the immediate issue is the eradication of fascist cesspools all over the world and the smashing of the fascist threat in America.

Opposition to migration as a solution does not mean that all migration should be opposed, or that migration of Negroes cannot help to solve their problems in cases—all too numerous—where Negro citizens (and often progressive whites) must leave the South to escape Klan terror and immediate death. It is also necessary to struggle for the right of Negroes to move away freely from peonage conditions in various counties and states. Meanwhile, labor and progressives in the North should combat the many discriminatory laws and regulations used against Negroes and other migrants to industrial centers, like residence restrictions against securing jobs and public assistance.

One cannot avoid the impression that Rep. Powell did not fully consider the consequences of the "mass migration solution" proposed in *Marching Blacks*. It must be said, however, that the proposition is provocative and is bound to stimulate discussion and thinking from which the correct path of the Negro people's struggle will be discovered. It will, moreover, focus much more attention on the responsibility of labor and progressives in other sections of the country toward the South, still our Problem Number One.

Rep. Powell's summons against racial and religious discrimination, against labor-baiting and Red-baiting, against fascism, deserves to be answered by labor and the American people in double-quick time. The need of the hour is to establish the broadest unity around such issues as the fight for peace, the preservation of wartime gains and labor's and veterans' rights, the smashing of anti-Negro terror—and to establish it among those who may disagree on other questions.

One must admire Rep. Powell's fearless, crusading spirit. An enrolled member of the Democratic Party, he is one of the all-too-few representatives of a major political party who has defied reactionary machine control. Independent political action by labor and the people can alone enable all Americans to defeat the imperialist war-making policies the administration is pursuing at this moment, and thus to avoid a catastrophe to the world and to our country.



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# BARCELONA: 1938

***"They are ours; it is the patrol," said young Gonzales. But to the child all planes were bombers. Even the bird hid its head in fear.***

## *A Short Story by TOM RAY*

ONLY a low range of mountains lay between him and Barcelona. The sun fringed the fog-wisps golden as the mist swept in from the Mediterranean, piled up against the other side of the hills, and spilled down the cliff-face. The cool air that poured in through the bullet-holes in the windshield was a pleasant contrast to the torrid Aragon. The numeral "3" chiseled in a kilometer-stone showed the distance that remained. Joe pressed the accelerator to the floor.

He figured out his program: Take the ambulance to the garage for a new windshield and a new clutch; find out how long it will take; then go to Carlos' family and give them the letter and package (probably have to stick around for a while); then a bath, clean clothes, a decent meal at a table with a cloth on it, a few drinks. . . . Maybe some of these Spanish girls—oh, what the hell!

Carlos—he'd liked him from the start. He was the only Spaniard at the *Servicio Sanidad* headquarters in Lerida who could speak English, and when he found out that Joe was going to Barcelona, he had given him a package and a letter of introduction to his family, saying, "My house is your house."

Mr. and Mrs. Carlos Gonzales, Sr., lived in a small apartment house only a little way from the garage. Awareness of heavy fatigue swept over Joe as he mounted the stairs and knocked at the door of Apartment 4. Carlos' mother answered the knock and stood peering around the partially opened door at the tall stranger, at his corduroy suit stained with the white mud of the high Spanish plateau, and at the knapsack he carried by the straps. The woman said, *"Que quiere?"*

Joe offered her the letter and spoke gently, "I have a letter from your son in Lerida." She quickly opened the door wide into a small sitting-room and motioned him to a chair as she tore impatiently at the envelope, saying, "How is he?" and sought the answer in the letter. The American gazed abstractedly about the room until he noticed a small gray bird in a cage hanging on the wall. Mrs. Gonzales looked up. "It is Carlos' bird," she said. "He asks about him in the letter. Have you eaten?"

Joe tapped his pocket. "I have money. I will eat at the hotel." He handed her the package. "Carlos sent this." She took the package and said, "I will save this for my husband. You will eat here."

Knuckles rapped on the thin panel of the door. *"Mi companero,"* she remarked and went to open it.

Mr. Gonzales was a tired-looking man of sixty-five, dressed in a threadbare suit that followed the bent lines of the elderly man's body as if he had worn it for many years. He looked at the American in friendly curiosity. Carlos' words came back to Joe: "My father sells insurance; there is no business now." Mrs. Gonzales explained the stranger's presence and pointed to the package on the table. "From Carlos." The old man grasped Joe's hand and asked if Carlos were well. When his wife added, "He is an American," he tightened his grip and said, *"Muy bien, muy bien. Voluntario."* He sat down and untied the package with trembling hands. It contained a loaf of bread, a small piece of brown soap, two cans of condensed milk, and a package of Spanish tobacco. Mr. Gonzales opened the tobacco and buried his nose in its fragrance. "It is good; have some." He offered the package to Joe.

The two Catalans and the American sat in silence for a time until Joe called on his inadequate Spanish. He told them he had become acquainted with their son in Lerida because Carlos spoke English so well. They nodded their heads in proud agreement. How he had had dinner with Carlos, and how their son admired the Americans and Roosevelt. The old man broke in, "Ah, Roosevelt, a great man—do you think he will help us?"

Mrs. Gonzales stirred restlessly and rose to prepare the evening meal. During the late supper—omelette, bread and salad—little conversation took place. The old couple forced food on him; it tasted good after the rough army meals, but he ate sparingly. The scantiness of the meal emphasized the tragedy of the war. Joe thought of the demolished buildings he had seen a few blocks from the house—their sides blown out and living quarters exposed like the back of a doll's house. "You have been bombed recently," he said.

Mrs. Gonzales said, "Yes, very close the last time." With her eyes and her hands, she conveyed to the foreigner that the concussion had blown her to the other side of the room. "I have much fear," she continued, "but my husband is not afraid. Are you, Carlos?"

The man raised his eyes slowly from his plate. "I am sorry, *senor*; we do not speak of the bombings any more."

The old man continued: "My other son is coming here tonight with his wife and baby; the child was born since the war began. But, come, will you go to the cafe with me? We will take coffee and cognac; it is my custom." He rose from the table as his wife began to clear away the dishes.

AS THE two men stepped out of the building, beams from scurrying cars and trucks sent long shadows chasing up and down the street. Light shone through the shutters of a nearby window, and a radio blared "The Blue Danube." From the next street came the voice of some Andalusian wailing a folk-song of his native south.

Gonzales took the American by the arm and led him to the cafe. Busy waiters hustled good-naturedly from one table to the other. There was only a sprinkling of khaki berets among the darker hats and caps. Strips of paper pasted to the mirrored back-bar and the iron pillars announced in Catalan: "There is no sugar." Almost every one had a glass of coffee-colored malt and a *copita* of rum or cognac in front of him.

Gonzales ordered two cognacs. He silently sipped the small drink and re-



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fused to have another when the American reordered. "It's bad," he said, pointing to his heart. After Joe had finished the third, the old man smiled. "You drink too much, my boy, but then it is the way. It is like old age. We have a saying in Spanish: 'Like the babies in limbo—neither in purgatory nor in hell.'" He looked at his watch. "We must go."

Their heels clicked hollowly on the pavement—the feeling of well-being that the American had obtained from the crowd and the lights and the liquor left him. He became conscious of the roofless sky above — the rising moon cast cold light on the upper stories of the bomb-scarred and windowless buildings across the street. They did not seem to be entities—just accumulations of stone and metal and glass, that only needed the stimulus of an exploding bomb to become crushing weights or tearing fragments. He longed for the open fields and friendly ditches of the countryside and cursed—for the thousandth time—the bland Spanish climate that permitted such clear and quiet air. A small light bulb splashed with red paint marked the yawning mouth of a crudely dug shelter; a hand-lettered sign above the door read "REFUGIO. 50 PERSONAS."

The two men passed a half-darkened wine shop, and the American made the older man enter with him. He felt better after he had bought a bottle of Pedro Domecq cognac.

As they mounted the stairs in the apartment house, the lights began to dim. "It is the *alarma;* let us go up to the roof. I will tell my wife," Gonzales said quietly.

Before Gonzales could knock, his wife opened the door. She threw her arms around her husband, sobbing hysterically, "You are here, Carlos. Come with me to the shelter."

He shook his head. "No, you go. Look, here comes Mrs. Puig; you can go with her." A woman with a sleepy child of three in her arms was descending the stairs—rapidly, yet without the haste of the panic-stricken. Gonzales spoke to her, and she took his wife by the arm and led her down the stairs.

Urged on by pride and a nameless desire, Joe followed Carlos' father to the roof. He pushed open the door at the top and the rising wail of the sirens assailed their ears. The two men walked to the edge and stood looking out over the city.

To the right lay the Plaza de Catalonia; it and the streets converging there were drenched in moonlight. From all quarters of the city came the shriek of the sirens—a symphony of impending disaster. From the south, the lonely tolling of a church bell added a mournful note. The last blue gleam died out of the street lamps. Barcelona lay breathless. Again the grand lottery was about to be drawn, and everybody had a number.

far out over the Mediterranean. Then each beam took an area of the depthless sky and sought frantically for the approaching bombers. Muffled sounds arose from the streets: a woman called hysterically for her child; warning police whistles blown by running guards accentuated the near-panic. Two young Spaniards accompanied by two nervous girls came out onto the roof.

Maurice Becker.

THE far-off sound of a motor reached the American's ears. Was it a truck laboring up a distant hill, or was it *aviacion*? The low note died and recurred—stronger this time. "Yes, it is *aviacion*," he muttered, half to himself.

He pointed toward the sea; and Gonzales nodded. "They come."

Searchlight beams from the surrounding hills sprang to life, carefully swept the sky, and focused on a point

The show was complete. Close-gleaming stars on a black sky formed the back-drop. The players were somewhere on the stage, but the electricians had missed their cue. Meanwhile the hum had grown to a roar that rose and fell with deadly regularity. . . . But *"Bravo, Bravo!"* the "spots" had found their mark—nine Savoia-Marchettis moving majestically across the Spanish sky. Fast-appearing bright flashes far above, followed by



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the characteristic pam-pam-pam of the anti-aircraft shells, gave heart to the spectators. But the fire-puffs lagged maddeningly behind the attackers. Thin whines marked the passage of the shrapnel from the shells exploding far above; one or two fragments fell unheeded on the roof.

"Why couldn't that last burst have been a few yards ahead?" He longed to see one of those unruffled birds brought spinning to earth. The memory of all the times he had been bombed surged over him and added to his hatred for these night-marauders.

He exulted as he imagined the suspense of the men in those planes. How they must hate the revealing beams which shone through the windows of the cabins! If the fast and deadly Russian *Chatos* took to the air soon enough!

The Italian planes did not even break formation. Two bombs fell in the southern part of the city, and the nine ships were lost in the darkness.

"They are going to Tarragona," said Gonzales. The American nodded his head. "They will return," he said to himself.

The searchlights were extinguished —no sound or motion came from the city. The timeless ripple of the Mediterranean glittered in the distance. Barcelona was like an ancient city reclaimed from the all-enfolding earth.

The reappearance of the light beams warned of the bombers' return, and in a short moment the drone again smote more than a million ears. Joe thought of the wake of terror behind those nine machines as they roared above a sleeping countryside. The rapid increase of the sound dwarfed all else to insignificance. The searchlights played across the sky, and the hum grew to a roar that seemed to enter the very nerve-cords. It seemed to the American that his finger-pads were pulsating in rhythm with the motors.

He wanted to die with a cigarette in his mouth. His lighter flared brightly. One of the soldiers cursed him. "Put out the light!" Joe answered him, "It makes no difference, you fool." His thoughts were all in his ears.

The sound approached crescendo—the bombs would be coming soon. He wondered and lifted his eyes in horrible compulsion: Could you *see* large bombs coming? He fought an urge to run off the roof and down the stairs; a repugnant, yet comforting fatalism stole over him . . . "If it's got your name written on it, there's no use running."

SOMEBODY up above flipped a lever, and a bomb left the rack of the leading Savoia. A growing, whining whistle signalled to those below that

Milton Zolotow.



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

five hundred pounds of metal and high explosive was tearing its way through clean air to earth.

Gonzales stuffed a handkerchief in his mouth. The American clenched the parapet to keep from throwing himself prone on the graveled roof. The scream grew—it resembled the sound of a fly-wheel started slowly, soundlessly—then forever accelerated . . . faster . . . faster . . . faster—until its sound reached an intensity defying all physical law, and the screaming wheel flew into a million fragments. Two blocks away a sheet of flame flashed through the windows of a four-story building. Earth and air writhed under the impact, almost throwing the four spectators off their feet. Where would the next one light? The others followed in rapid succession. . . .

As quickly as it had come, it was over. The light-pencils traced aimlessly back and forth on the carbon paper of the sky. The drone of the motors — lighter now, with burdens gone — diminished rapidly. The beams of light suddenly pointed, accusingly, out over the Mediterranean, toward Italy, and were extinguished.

The city stirred itself; the pain-cry of a racing ambulance was the first sign of returning vitality. Impulses crept back along its outraged nerves; blue lamps flickered and grew stronger; the sound of starting automobile motors echoed through the empty streets; alarm sirens gave the "all clear"; and strained voices drifted up from the streets — nervous laughter and shouted greetings.

After a while, the Spaniard and the American turned from the parapet and went wordlessly down the stairs.

Mrs. Gonzales met them at the door; she grasped her husband's arms and murmured, "Carlos, you are safe!" He stroked her hair and comforted her; they entered the room together. The bird was hopping excitedly about his cage; the pendulum of the clock was swinging on into eternity.

The three sat down at the table, and the American unwrapped the bottle of cognac. Mrs. Gonzales placed two small glasses on the table, and Joe hoped that they wouldn't notice how his hand shook. It was good cognac. After he had a couple of drinks, he felt more like talking; the bombing seemed very far back in the past.

"How old is your other son?" he asked.

"Thirty-five," replied Gonzales.

Joe reached again for the bottle. A knock sounded at the door and he let his hand slip caressingly down the smooth glass. The old man rose from his chair with a pleased smile. "They are here now," he said.

Manuel Gonzales stood in the door for a moment, holding his son in his arms. He was an alert-looking man with dark and even features. His light-brown hat, rakishly tipped, matched his well-pressd suit. The child, near three, black-eyed and vivacious, struggled to get to the floor. The young Spaniard held him awkwardly and smiled in frank approval at Joe as his father introduced the volunteer. "*Americano*, from the front—today."

"It pleases me," replied Manuel; he turned to his wife, standing in the hall: "Maria," then to Joe: "*Senor*, my wife."

Maria, hatless, with thick black hair and sad eyes belying her smile, bowed and said modestly, "It pleases me."

The child struggled free and toddled over to the bird-cage as the adults seated themselves. He thrust his arms up toward the cage, fingers opening and closing spasmodically.

THE Catalans politely tried to include the American in their conversation; they spoke in the Castilian tongue, slowly and carefully. Seeing his interest lag, however, they soon slipped into the more facile, liquid syllables of their native Catalan.

Joe amused himself by watching the child. The baby's face was radiant with interest as he watched the bird, which was tugging at a piece of lettuce stuck between the bars of its cage. When the bit of green parted suddenly, almost throwing the bird off balance, the child laughed joyfully. All of the American's attempts to coax him to his knee were futile.

Suddenly, a silence came over the room—momentarily Joe thought it was one of those lulls in conversation. The familiar feeling of dread swept over him. Were *they* coming back? The child's mother crossed herself rapidly and turned pale; the two men raised their eyes to the ceiling and shrugged their shoulders. Their attitude and the presence of the light stilled the dread in Joe's heart; he fixed his attention on the child.

His face grew sober, then slowly changed to horror. He looked about the room, distractedly, and with a stifled cry ran to his mother's arms.

The rising note of the sirens filled the room; no one moved. Joe reached over and refilled the glasses with cognac.

The sirens died, and the silence seemed more terrible than the scream had been. The baby remained standing with its elbows in its mother's lap, its head half-turned to the light. He was listening, as was everyone else in the room.

Slowly the lights dimmed and left the group in darkness. Mr. Gonzales struck his lighter and touched its wavering flame to the wick of a small oil lamp. It caught reluctantly, wavered for an instant, and lived. Shadows crept up the walls and set up a mad dance to the *flamenco* of the sirens that shrieked in renewed terror.

Again the *alarma* died away, and the strained voices of the Catalans, pitched in even tones, gave the illusion of security. The child left its mother's side and approached the bird, motionless on its perch. His attitude was unnatural; he sensed the falseness of the adults' reactions, and again started for the sanctuary of his mother's lap, but the even conversational tones arrested him in mid-room. He looked at his father, his mother, and then at the swinging pendulum of the clock.

Again, sharply, conversation ceased —the staccato sound of low-flying, single-motored planes seeped into the room. The younger Gonzales said simply, "They are ours; it is the patrol."

The American knew that he was right—bombers, flying at tremendous altitudes to avoid the anti-aircraft, produce a diffused swarm-of-bees sound. But before anyone could speak comfortingly to the child, he ran sobbing to his mother's lap. She stroked his hair and murmured a nameless lullaby of sympathy and pain.

The motors faded away into the night.

As the filaments of the electric light began to grow red, the old man reached over and pinched out the flame of the oil lamp.

Soon the child, who had climbed into his mother's arms, extended his legs; he slowly disentangled his feet from the dark stuff of her dress and placed them on the floor. Once more he went to watch the bird, which stood motionless with its head under one wing.



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# THE ABC OF SOCIALISM

***In the midst of the crises of today one can find in Engels' "Socialism: Utopian and Scientific" an understanding of the laws of social change.***

## By RALPH BOWMAN

BOOKS THAT CHANGE THE WORLD: *This is the third of a series on the Marxist classics. Previously discussed were Marx's "Value, Price and Profit" (April 30), and Engel's "Dialectics of Nature" (June 4). Another in this series will be published soon.*

FOR three generations all varieties of bourgeois philosophers, theoreticians and economists have been refuting and burying Marxism, only to find that its acceptance by the working class grows at an accelerated pace, especially since Marxism became the effective guiding philosophy of the first socialist state. It must be tempting for hostile critics to seek to refute the writings of men published one hundred years ago. But there are also honest men who ask: is it really possible that Marxism could still be valid after all these years?

Marxism has triumphantly survived all the periodic "refutations" for the same reason that its contemporary, Darwinism, survived similar refutations by theologians: both are true. Both represent the discovery of inexorable laws of evolution, one in the sphere of human society, the other in the organic world. Although a wide distinction exists in quality and magnitude between the historic contributions of Marx and Darwin, they both withstood the test of time, subsequent scientific progress and human experience because they were discoveries of laws of movement and development in the actual living world.

These are ample and compelling reasons why today in the midst of crises and accelerating social changes one should read and re-read the authoritative work on Marxism by Frederick Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*. This little booklet was specially prepared by Engels for circulation among working people. Its widespread popularity has been second only to that of the *Communist Manifesto*. It was probably easier for workers of Engels' generation to understand than for ours. They had had less subtle bourgeois ideology and confusion drummed into their heads than we. But let no one think this is a simple agitational pamphlet: while Engels had a gift for clear and easy writing, he had the deepest respect for the working class and published only writings of highest scientific quality and enduring value. And he had abiding faith that workers could comprehend the most difficult and profound ideas when properly presented. While he and Marx realized that scientific theory had to be formulated "outside" of the working class because of the cultural level of the time, they knew that no outside saviours could institute socialism.

When they wrote: "The emancipation of the working class must be accomplished by the working class" they expressed faith in their historic discoveries and equal faith in the limitless potential capacity of workingmen to master their own scientific theory and to organize and lead the great movement to emancipate all humanity from exploitation of man by man. For these reasons let us approach this booklet with humility, for herein are contained liberating principles and historical perspectives formulated by the greatest minds of the nineteenth century and already put into rewarding practice in one-sixth of the world. Here is contained a new world outlook and approach to social problems that differs from non-Marxist views as fundamentally as the modern scientific concept of evolution differs from the biblical account of creation.

The first thing that strikes one about this book is the deep sense of history on the one hand, and the emphasis on philosophy and dialectical thinking on the other. If one misses this on first reading it is safe to say that he has failed to grasp the essence and the living spirit of Engels' method. And this dialectical method and outlook is, as Engels points out, the genesis of Marxism. In his tribute to his great predecessor Hegel, who first outlined the dialectic world outlook, he writes: ". . . For the first time the whole world, natural, historical, intellectual, is represented as a process, i.e. as in constant motion, change, transformation, development; and the attempt is made to trace out the internal connection that makes a continuous whole of all this movement and development." This passage contains the fundamental point of departure (though not its entire substance) of the dialectic outlook and mode of reasoning. It appears simple and almost self-evident but all too often it is not absorbed to mold and direct our reasoning. Engels understood this deficiency in our traditional deep-rooted habits of thinking. He called it metaphysical (static, disconnected or mechanical) thinking.

**"Said he'd just been listening to a speech by Sir Alexander Cadogan."**



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The entire second chapter is devoted to this broad and vital subject, treated historically as a pre-condition to the two fundamental discoveries of Marx: "the materialist conception of history and the revelation of the secret of capitalist production through surplus value. With these discoveries socialism became a science." I begin with and emphasize this illuminating second chapter because it contains the theoretical core of Marxism and its creative spirit and because we Americans, of all people, have the greatest difficulty, in grasping the dialectic method in our work and reasoning. It is not always easy to recognize this deficiency.

While reading this chapter one should pause to reflect on how all this applies to one's own thinking, experience and problems, remembering that Engels considered this third of his book an essential, integral part of Marxist teaching to be understood by ordinary class-conscious workers for whom it was written. Once mastered, the dialectic method becomes the key to all further problems of theory, strategy and tactics, of all processes in life, becomes the indispensable connecting link between theory and practice. And this is no small matter. Many who eventually grasp this or that or several elements of Marxist theory wonder how it applies on the picketline, in union affairs, to problems of local and national politics, to the controversy over Iran or the denazification of Germany. How can a theory worked out a hundred years ago help solve today's problem? This question arises only when Marxism (and Leninism) is understood superficially or in disconnected fragments.

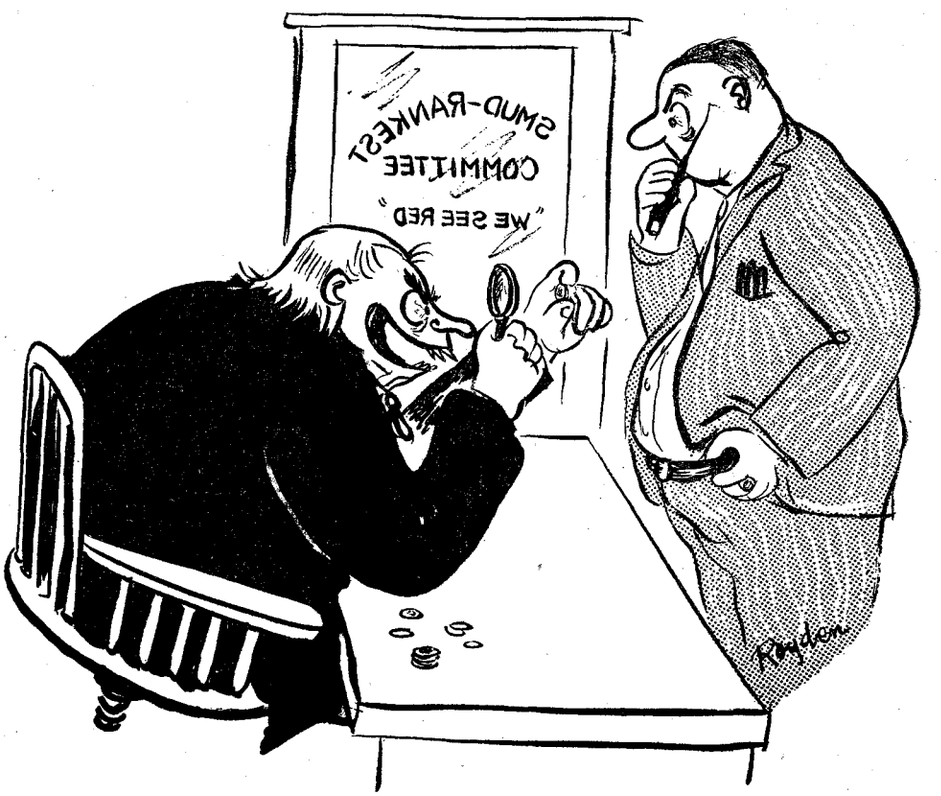
ENGELS' first chapter deals with the great forebears of Marxism. Here we learn about the profound progressive contributions and the unavoidable limitations of the great French materialist philosophers who prepared the mind of France for the world-shaking social upheaval of the French Revolution; also the theories, labors and limitations of the giants of pre-scientific socialism, St. Simon, Fourier and Robert Owen. A genius like Engels displays no disdain for these historic forefathers of socialism. He towers above them only because he was able, so to speak, to stand on their shoulders. He pays them generous tribute for the necessary spadework that made his own and Marx's contributions possible. As a social scientist he analyzes their theories, adopts the positive core of their work and reveals their limitations, which he ascribes not to their personal or intellectual inadequacies but to the level of development of the science, philosophy and productive forces of their time.

This treatment of the great fighters for human rights, security and freedom supplies the true background of the historical development of society and that of its last revolutionary class, the proletariat. After reading this and the second chapter one can turn to Lenin's brief article, "The Three Sources and Three Components of Marxism," and grasp its full meaning. Another important feature of this first chapter is the sense of continuity and progress in man's ceaseless struggle against all oppression. The proletarian socialist movement is shown to be a continuation of all earlier liberating movements, qualitatively on a new and higher level; it is history's final movement of emancipation, breaking ground for a truly free society after which all earlier stages of social development will be considered the "pre-history of mankind." This outlook becomes a part of the substance of the third and final chapter.

In the third chapter Engels deals with Marxist political economy. To many this will immediately recall definitions, elaborations and interrelations of such scientific terms and concepts as commodity, use values, exchange values, ground rent, labor power, prices, etc., usually taught in our political economy classes. But Engels treats the subject in broad historical terms. He traces the development of capitalist production, social relations and class conflicts from medieval times to his own period. It is done in a living and fascinating manner which nobody has yet surpassed. There are many quotations from *Capital*, but mainly from the historical chapters, in themselves surprisingly warm, passionate and clear. All the main laws and contradictions of capitalism are explained, including the creation of surplus value, economic crises, the role of the state and the historic mission of the proletariat, which is the essential Marxist contribution to the much older concept of the class struggle. In this chapter Engels develops his theory of the "withering away" of the state under communism. There is a fine summary of the subject at the close of the chapter.

One should mention that this little

## Sen. Rankest Says:




**"Quick, Ernie—go find the guy who passed this penny—it's got Lincoln's picture on it."**



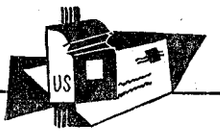
PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

booklet consists of specially prepared parts of three chapters of Engels' *Anti-Duhring*, the richest and most complete single volume of Marxist theory. While *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* is not a substitute for the parent work, it does contain its most important elements, and those for whom time is a limiting factor may well concentrate on it first without missing anything essential. *Anti-Duhring*, it should be noted, was highly valued, studied and re-read by Lenin, especially in times of crisis and change. A correspondent to Yenan, China, reported that Mao Tse Tung, the gifted leader of the Chinese Communists, always has his well-worn copy of *Anti-Duhring* within reach. The smaller version of it deserves the same treatment. Serious students of Marxism will be thrilled with new discoveries at each reading. Why is this so? The explanation is to be found partly in the process of one's own intellectual growth and partly in the earlier comment on the historic roots of our deeply-rooted mechanical habits of thinking which are so hard to recognize and overcome. That is why Engels should be studied not only for the general content of his works but also for appreciation and emulation of his lucid and creative dialectical mode of reasoning.

There is also the brilliant introduction to this booklet by Engels, written some years after its first publication, showing even greater maturity and which again traces the historic origins and emphasizes the vital importance of what we now call historical and dialectic materialism. Engels has made some of his most important contributions in several introductions, each of which is a work of enduring value. If the reader begins with the introduction he should complete the book by returning to it.

Let no one undertake to complete the seventy-five pages of this booklet in an evening or two. It can be done, of course, even the first time, but only at the expense of missing some of the best products of Engels' genius. This booklet is a condensation of the essence of a great thinker's mature wisdom. Each line and each paragraph is pregnant with the ripe fruits of the accumulated experience of all human social and intellectual development. It is an invaluable heritage bequeathed to us by this great co-founder of scientific socialism and fighter for the emancipation of the working class and all mankind.

# mail call




## In Praise of "Ollie"

To New Masses: I have just reread Natalie J. Blonche's story "Ollie" in the May 28 NM. I believe this is one of the finest short stories I have read in NM. Miss Blonche has with artful simplicity ably created a very important American character—Ollie.

Ollie is the young American woman we found building planes and ships in our war against the Axis. This is the earth-bound realistic young woman worker in our factories today: bearing the exploitation of wage labor while struggling to remain hopeful in her aspirations for a full, normal life of fun, love—and a home and family.

It seems to me that, because Ollie is presented so credibly as a character of today, we can also see her in a fuller historical light than portrayed in the story. We can also see Ollie as the courageous woman helping to build America from early colonial times on through the western expansion and growth of our country. And Ollie is the young woman worker of today who is arriving at an understanding of the necessary organization of her fellow workers into trade unions, and she is willingly walking the picketline when the struggle demands it.

Herman Wakstein.

Los Angeles.

## Art Is a Language

To New Masses: Much has been written and said in the last months on the question of art as a weapon. This has spread to articles and letters on the nature and definition of art itself, and the relative value of modern and realistic painting as propaganda for social progress.

The reversion to "pure form" in the plastic arts was a reaction to the horrors of unorganized realism. From the Impressionists, whose theories were based on the new discoveries of light, and the Futurists, on the increasing sense of speed, to the Cubists seeking measureable planes for constructive form satisfying the esthetic sense alone, the artist found in arrangement of directed and measured lines extended possibilities of expression for experiences having common social or universal significance. The Surrealists depend for unity of unrelated objects, not only on the individual significance, but on position, interval and related tones.

Instead, therefore, of denouncing the art of the "abstractionists" as a language for only the sophisticated few, should we not rather recognize the value of the geometric basis their discoveries afford us, and the significance possible in scientifically related shapes, lines and tones so ably exemplified with force and mastery in the "Guernica" of Picasso, or in so satisfying a portrait of a "fellow inmate at Buchenwald" by Taslitzky in NM of May 21? If the "Moderns" have created nothing of social significance, they have at least brought organization into the chaos of individualism in the arts. They have given us the means for a grammar based on natural laws of unity, to which all great art has conformed down through the ages. It is these laws we can teach to our children and students along with a knowledge of social relationships. For it is by these laws of relationship that we judge a work of art, not by its content alone, or its resemblance to the objects presented.

Art as a language thus becomes fuller and richer as a means of social expression. And, again, "if any child can paint that way," as some assert of the "modernists," why is not that a good argument for a "folk art" which does not require a lifetime to perfect?

M. F. W.

Santa Barbara, Cal.

## Bad Little Tailor?

To New Masses: What place had "The Brave Little Tailor" in the *new* New Masses? [NM, May 21.]

The portrayal of a kindly Death with a watch and a conscience is certainly so far removed from even the most obvious tenets of Marxian realism as to be laughable. College sophomores write about death like that after a campus dance.

Did Miriam Bruce hope to show us to what depth man is driven by bourgeois society that "Immigrant's Savings" is the only message a dying man can leave to his wife and son? I hope it is, for if not, all we have is a picture of another stereotype Jew—with a little money. You can bet your life Ben Field would never have handled the subject that way. Of course not all writers should imitate Ben Field and Mike Gold—but on the very delicate subject of Jewish people in our society, at a time when the KKK is burning crosses on Jewish fraternities and desecrating the Torah saved from Berlin and the Nazis, "The Brave Little Tailor" is an insult to militant Jews everywhere. I'd better get off the subject. The critical approach I started with is leaving me.

Was it coincidence that on the same page



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

we were treated to some anti-humanist drawings that even *Esquire* has ceased printing? I refer to Rickerson, Greenwald and Bender. Publish student work, of course, but in your attempt to bring new art to the people, make sure it's really new—and not just old stuff by new people.

Just because Plekhanov said that "the art of a decadent epoch *must* be decadent" we don't have to prove him right. Our Marxist art must have those very qualities of life, health, strength, hope for the future and belief in the dignity of mankind which bourgeois art lacks. I do not believe "Brave Little Tailor" or the sketches mentioned had any of these qualities. They resembled more the figure from New Guinea on page 29, created at a time and in a country where Marxism was unknown. NM has neither time nor space to portray a dying culture. We need glimpses of the new life and lots about the present struggle. The May 21 issue stands in contrast to these of earlier weeks.

LOUIS LANDE.

Berkeley, Cal.

## People Are Learning

TO NEW MASSES: The people of the North Star Country—Michigan's Upper Peninsula—are moving forward in political self-education. There is something new under the sun that shines on society when workers take steps to solve their own basic economic problems—rather than standing and waiting for a WPA to do it.

What will happen when the depression strikes again is strongly forecast by recent developments in the Upper Peninsula. In this economically "exhausted" region depression is already a fact with 10,000 unemployed and less than 500 jobs reported available by the USES.

Instead of waiting for breadlines to form, the Dickinson County CIO called a conference to which a large number of both CIO and AFL delegates came. After forming themselves into the Upper Peninsula Rehabilitation and Economic Council, two committees were established, one to consider proposals for reforestation, use of low-grade ores, aid to farmers, development of the St. Lawrence waterway and a second to work for the enactment of needed legislation.

The Council will look first to private industry to get rolling, will then support subsidy measures if required, will call for government projects if subsidies fail to bring full employment. And if these fail, the Council is on record for government operation of mines and lumbering.

This initial reaction to the first signs of depression may well forecast the pattern of the future: prompt action in advance of the crisis, action on the basis of labor rank-and-file unity, action along planning lines rather than mere demonstrations of unemployed before relief offices, action up to and including government operation.

In wars and in crises the people are learning. The essence of democracy is swelling to fulfillment. There's freshness and vitality in the "exhausted" back-country, where one can see the future, "and it works."

DOROTHY JUNE NEWBURY.

Chicago.

## Mrs. Luce's Laughter

TO NEW MASSES: On the May 21 edition of the American Forum of the Air, in a debate on the possibility of communism and capitalism working together in peace, Clare Booth Luce sneeringly repeated again and again, while one of her opponents, Dr. Harry F. Ward, was trying to talk, "Let Russia lift the iron curtain. What is Stalin so ashamed of that he is afraid to let the world see?"

This is the reward a nation receives that lost nearly ten percent of its population fighting back single handed, armies that totaled nearly five million of the most brutalized cutthroats ever to wage war. This is the reward a nation receives whose lands were devastated and thousands of whose villages and cities were destroyed. That is all this despicable creature can offer as thanks, a cold-blooded, contemptuous sneering, "Lift the iron curtain."

There was the valorous deed done while all mankind stood breathlessly by in fear, wondering if Soviet Russia could do it. She did it . . . lifted the iron curtain! And the whole world saw what happened. Soviet Russia stopped the iron curtain of death from descending upon the whole world.

The only iron curtain that exists is the iron curtain that hangs before the eyes of those who blindly hate Soviet Russia, and who would see only what they already see now if they did visit Soviet Russia. The only iron curtain that exists is the iron curtain of lies that over ninety percent of the American press and the highly paid anti-Sovieteers like Mrs. Luce's debating partner, Chamberlin, have woven for over twenty-five years.

One imagined, while listening to Mrs. Luce's cold, contemptuous laughter, the same kind of laughter coming from the female aristocrats as they watched the brave French patriots shot down in cold blood by their rulers after the fall of the Paris Commune. This is the laughter of the soulless, the ruthless jungle beast in human form.

MARK KEATS.

Los Angeles.

## Say It With Ballots

TO NEW MASSES: My Congressman and I are still trying to educate each other (see NM, May 7):

"Dear Mr. F: . . . I think you have been very much mislead (sic) with reference to the Committee on Un-American Activities. It is engaged not in throttling free speech of Americans but in trying to stop those destructive operations of foreign propogandists (sic) in the United States.

"Unless one is anxious to have created in the United States the system of Russian communism, we must, by every means within our power, try to stop inroads of communism. We will have the twelve-hour day and a seven-day week for everybody and a dole for food and clothing.

"John Taber."

My rebuttal: "Dear Mr. Taber: . . . You say communism means the eighty-four-hour week, yet with production amounting to only a dole for food and clothing. Other patriotic Americans who believe that both employment conditions and output would be improved, unquestionably have an equal right (and duty) to speak. I do not think I am in fact misled, as you suggest, in understanding that the Committee on Un-American Activities, like the Dies committee which it continues, has not confined itself to foreigners but has actually investigated, annoyed and brought pressure upon American citizens.

"It seems to me it is you who have been misled into the position of approving these Wood-Rankin-Dies attacks on Americans who stand up for free speech. Such attacks are clearly an undemocratic, even proto-fascist, effort to throttle this right, and I urge you to reconsider.

LEWIS FISHER.

Aurora, N. Y.

## Author to Reviewer

TO NEW MASSES: Your readers may be interested in this letter which I received from Vardis Fisher following publication of my review of his work (NM, May 14):

"I don't know of anything I have ever published that would justify you in the last remark of your review of *Intimations of Eve*. Far from setting out to make primitive man a scapegoat "on the basis of a scientific Original Sin" or on any other basis, in an effort to justify the "present unhappy human condition," my whole thesis in this series of novels is, briefly stated, that it is long past time for humanity to throw away its intolerable burden inherited from the past. I have in mind the stupid belief in "original sin," the multitude of cults and superstitions, the fear of and indeed the belief in a "supernatural" world, and the whole mess of primitive myth that degrades instead of elevates the spirit of man, and persuades him through priest, pulpit and politician that he is born in depravity. Not until we unload this vast burden of nonsense and fear can we really be free.

"Does that answer the question you raised? And thanks for your review. It is perhaps the most intelligent one I have had on this book, and it is your sincere effort to understand what I am trying to do that calls forth this letter. Sincerely, VARDIS FISCHER."

TOM MCGRATH.

New York.



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# review and comment

## BIBLE IN THE BACKWOODS

***The rites and patterns of the "forty-leven" cults and sects in the country of The Word.***

**By MERIDEL LE SUEUR**

DEW ON JORDAN, *by Harold Preece and Celia Kraft. Dutton.* $2.50.

NO ONE from the inland country, where on summer evenings the only center to keep you from falling off into the periphery of the prairie loneliness was the clapboard, bravely steepled church, the only book the Bible, the only word The Word, can read this book with anything but gnashing of teeth and weeping and much bitter laughter.

Like Mr. Preece and Celia Kraft I can't forget the early communal church, still alive now in the villages and mountains, which then was the town hall, the democratic center as the union is today in the cities. Religion mixed liberally with freedom and the right to have your own Bible had to be fought for too; the communes were green along the rivers and the colleges went up with the whiskey still and became underground stations, and itinerent preachers were then like labor leaders preaching The Word in the wilderness. It was The Word that men should be free, carried horseback by preachers, that caused blacksmith and farmer to line up with Mr. Tom Jefferson in the big battle to disestablish the state church of Virginia, as it later exhorted men to fight against slavery, both black and white.

"It was The Word," says *Dew On Jordan,* "interpreted as they variously understood it without the nuances of rite or incense, which like seed sown in the earth caused the little clapboard churches of a hundred sects to crop up from the soil as fast as it grew sour grass and poke 'sallet'."

Mr. Preece comes of the old Campbellites, the Disciples, and Celia Kraft sneaked away in her early years from her pious grandfather Reb Fyva, from the synagogue and the Schule to go to the Oneness Holiness Tabernacle, "jinin in" to sing:

*Oh, I'm just out of jail,*
*The Son of God has gone my bail."*

The two of them set out for the Tennessee and Kentucky mountains, the country of The Word, of many cults splitting on whether to sprinkle or dip, whether to use one chalice or individual communion cups, where their neighbors knew more about the fall of Jericho than the fall of Berlin. There they became part of the life of the hills, entertaining crones of the herb and pot, and "one gallus" preachers like Brother Dee, who was likely to turn up anywhere from the Panhandle to Detroit, one of the preachers of "forty-leven different kinds of saints a-believing in the same things but a-goin' by different names. No sir, the Devil done sneaked in with the saints and pizened the crops."

They tell of the awful snake cult in the mountains where you can smell and hear the snakes from far off, and the sexual orgies, the healing prayer meetings on Blackberry mountain, baptizing on Wildcat River and foot washing at Little Hurricane. They chronicle the collective rites and patterns, many vestigial, others emerging, splitting into new apparitions of nightmare, and the distortions of cultural drought and spiritual sickness of capitalism.

At its best the church in remote parts is still the center of brotherhood, neighborliness, and belief in "that freedom train," and still creates in the feudal wilderness, in forgotten whistle stops, primitive Christians who have a fineness and purity about them as if they just came off the Boone trail. But here also narrowness and festering dogma give ground for fascist and feudal doctrine.

They encounter the storm troopers of the Conquering Church, the prophets of the Crooked Cross—the swastika, no less. There is a blood-curdling description of how the hungry, the believing, fall prey to this stream of filth, bought and paid for by the pennies of sharecroppers and mountain folk: *The Dawn, The Prophetic Time, The Plain Truth,* the *Bible News Flashes* of Prophet W. D. Herrstrom of Minneapolis and a publication from Peoria, Illinois, which sells religion and tractors.

Millions of dollars have been spent in Detroit, San Francisco, Chicago, Los Angeles to build huge barn-like tabernacles for hell-roaring preachers who spread anti-Semitism, anti-Negro, anti-labor and anti-Communist doctrine to the millions who listen and look for the devil on earth in some form. The small sects, as this book points out, "with their resentments and frustrations, the resentment of workers whose yesterday was want and whose tomorrow is 'don't know,' " are fields being plowed by the sowers of hate—hate of the Jew and Negro, foreigners, labor unions, Communists.

The Roosevelt program reached deep fingers into those hills. Now with the CIO in the South, these remote regions will not be outside the province of the union hall, the pamphlet, the paper.

B. Golden



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

One would perhaps wish in this book—which is mightily entertaining and rich with the spice, the vernacular, as well as the history of the sects—a little more social background and interpretation. I think this would not have detracted from the entertaining and vivid character of the writing.

There is another note which confused me and it is a question which often comes up in the writings of Caldwell, and other Southern writers: the note of the comic and the grotesque. I know that the distortion and pull of economic weather has made the human there, like a tortured tree on a ridge, resemble a caricature. But should not the grotesque also be full of the pain which distorted it and as near to horror as to the comic? There are times in this book when one feels a little uneasy. I know there was no intention upon the part of the authors to make the characters merely amusing; it sometimes seems as if the authors were spectators—a little amused, not quite going behind the people in full sympathy and apprehension of the person and the scene.

For these scenes of orgy and nostalgia and simple bucolic worship have deep implications in our national character and life. They are profound auguries of the future, for they are awful symptoms of the starvation, rickets and disease of the spirit which are in some ways more menacing than pellagra.

This is a fine beginning in exploration in a little-known field where there are ominous vestiges of feudal darkness, but which is also full of the rich roots of our past.

## Did Women Matter?

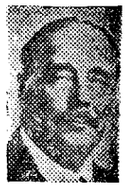
WOMAN AS FORCE IN HISTORY, *by Mary R. Beard. Macmillan.* $3.50.

IT ISN'T easy to get at the point in Mrs. Beard's haystack of findings, which have been raked from an immense field of research. She herself emphasizes that her book is purely a "study." Early in the work, however, she reveals that the study has an intention: to demolish "the image of woman throughout long ages of the past as a being always and everywhere subject to *male* man or as a ghostly creature too shadowy to be even that real." As if the image were not weird enough, Mrs. Beard tells us that this ghostly creature, always and everywhere subject, "haunts thousands of printed pages." Historians, in her opinion, have treated woman as a "nothingness"; writers, political leaders and lawyers have accepted their point of view.

At that point readers may begin to suspect that Mrs. Beard has used her haystack to fashion a straw man. They can confirm their suspicion at once by turning to the remarks prefacing her twenty-five-page bibliography at the end of the book. Here the author states that "The subject of woman in history is as gigantic as the subject of man in history, one learns merely by dipping into the files of any major library of the world. . . ." But if the reader has gone through the book first, the latter statement will hardly surprise him. For it turns out that Mrs. Beard has invented and torn down an image that is out of perspective in order to present one that is out of this world: a woman who was *never* subject to man, who was denied few opportunities and who suffered little discrimination.

To establish such a conception is quite a feat, and Mrs. Beard tries awfully hard. She parades before us nearly every woman who has exerted any force on civilization, for good or bad, from the Virgin Mary to Hitler's female terrorists. Only one group is played down as a force—the early fighters for women's rights. These the author discusses in a tone of mild derision. It seems that the poor dears never realized they were fighting a myth, being unable to recognize a "right" after they had possessed it for years and years. Nobody ever told them that they had been misled by Blackstone and Blackstone's disciples, whose interpretations of the law had decreed "civil death" for the married woman. But if Mary Wollstonecraft and Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Mercy Warren had only examined the procedures and precedents of equity courts, they would have seen that, contrary to Blackstone, a woman could and usually did manage to retain possession of her property after marriage. So what was all the shooting about?

Now it doesn't take a historian to know that: (1) Mary Wollstonecraft concentrated her efforts on educational opportunities for women; (2) among the most militant of the feminists were the campaigners for women's suffrage; (3) women have been battling for years, and the battle isn't over, against wage discriminations; (4) they have been battling against other, more subtle forms of discrimination in numerous fields; and (5) no matter what re-

**H. G. WELLS—**
***Prophet of the Atomic Bomb***

•

READ HIS LATEST BOOK:

**"CRUX ANSATA—An Indictment of the Roman Catholic Church"**

An historical summary of the Catholic Church's political intrigues leading to its tie-up with the Nazi-Fascist-Shinto Axis.

Cloth Binding $1.75

•

Also Get a Copy of

**"BEHIND THE DICTATORS"**
**by L. H. Lehmann**

A fully documented analysis of Vatican-Fascist collaboration. Cloth Binding $1.75

Combination Offer
Both Cloth Bound Books . . . . $3.00

•

New Pamphlet
**"Vatican Policy in the Second World War"**
48 pages of Documented Facts . . . . 25c

☞ Free to those who return this ad with their order for the above books.

Order from:
**AGORA PUBLISHING CO., Dept. 756B**
229 West 48th St. New York 19, N. Y.

***Get the book you want***
with your
***New Masses subscription***
Save 50 cents to $1.00
Reduction made from subscription rate (reg. $6 a year), not book list price.
Your Choice of

| | List Price | Combination Price |
|---|---|---|
| **WIND IN THE OLIVE TREES.. by Abel Plenn** | $3.00 | $8.25 |
| **THE STREET ---------- by Ann Petry** | 2.50 | 7.75 |
| **THE GREAT CONSPIRACY --- by Albert E. Kahn and Michael Sayers** | 3.50 | 8.50 |
| **THE TRUTH ABOUT UNIONS.. by Leo Huberman** | 1.00 | 6.50 |
| **PIPER TOMPKINS ---------- by Ben Field** | 2.50 | 7.75 |
| **ARAGON ---------- Poet of the French Resistance** | 2.00 | 7.50 |
| **NORTH STAR COUNTRY ----- by Meridel Le Sueur** | 3.00 | 8.25 |
| **THE COLLECTED WORKS OF V. I. Lenin—Volume 23.....** | 2.75 | 8.00 |
| **THE NATURE OF CAPITALISM by Anna Rochester** | .35 | 6.00 |
| **DAYS AND NIGHTS ------- by Konstantin Simonov** | 2.75 | 8.00 |
| **RACE AND DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY ---------- by Franz Boas** | 2.50 | 8.00 |

Add 50c for Canadian; $1 for Foreign Postage




PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CAMP UNITY
Wingdale, N. Y.
No Reservations Available:
July 3-14
Do Not Come Out Without Reservations
Entire Social Staff with
LEO NORMAN and UNITY BAND
FRANCIS FRANKLIN—Staff Lecturer
(courtesy Jefferson School)
Transportation: N. Y. Central R.R. to Wingdale, N. Y.
New York Office: ONE UNION SQUARE
AL. 4-8024 Wingdale 2461
Louis Pasternak, Manager

EVERYTHING YOUR HEART DESIRES
(and more!) awaits you here! Over 25 ways to have fun, including Tennis, Swimming, Boating, Handball, Riding, Dancing, Arts & Crafts. All Other Sports. Good Eating, Merry Company. Cheery Quarters, Regular and Deluxe. Full Entertainment Staff.
MAKE RESERVATIONS NOW
Notify us promptly, enclosing deposit. Easy to reach by train, bus or door-to-door taxi service.
OPEN TIL AFTER NEW YEAR'S
WOODBOURNE, N.Y. Tel. WOODBOURNE 1150
CHESTERS ZUNBARG
A DELIGHTFUL HIDEAWAY IN THE MOUNTAINS

Indian Lake Lodge
In the Heart of the Adirondacks
INDIAN LAKE, N.Y.
N. Y. C. phone: UNderhill 3-0330
Ten Mile Long Lake, a backdrop of 3,500-foot mountain ranges, a hundred acres of lawn and woodland.
Scenic beauty plus all water sports, tennis, hiking, informal atmosphere, good food and comfortable quarters are yours
TO SEPTEMBER 15th
Herman Schwartzman, Program Director

MERRIEWOODE
A Camp for Adults Stoddard, N. H
FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT: Beautiful Highland Lake, 10 miles long, with good fishing and free use of boats and canoes; interesting hiking objectives thru woodland trails; fine tennis and handball courts, badminton, shuffleboard, archery, riflery, croquet, ping-pong, square dancing.
$45 & $50 weekly. OLIVE H. G. BARON, Dir.

SCHROON Crest
IN THE ADIRONDACKS
POTTERSVILLE, N. Y.
SPECIAL JUNE RATES
Private Beach. Canoes. Boating. All Sports. Recordings. Playhouse. Bar. Dancing Nightly. Jules Adolphe and his Group. Harry Alshin and Orchestra. Excellent Cuisine.
N. Y. Office Phone: MAin 4-8570
LEAH OKUN, IRV. SCHOENGERG, Mgt.
An Adult Resort—on Schroon Lake

course equity offered, the "civil death" was written into the law and, according to Mrs. Beard herself, led to "horrifying abuses."

Such truths are either ignored by the author or whispered low in passing. At times she almost produces the same effect of unreality as the slick magazines for women, wherein stories portraying woman, forever pursued by man run between columns of ads offering the reader every kind of device for intriguing, ensnaring, and securing the elusive male. Not all the forceful women in history that Mrs. Beard can dig up, not all the information (some of it quite impressive) regarding their membership in the medieval guilds or their role as scholars, writers, etc., adds up to equality. Too much has been omitted from the picture: for example, the proportion of women to men who have been able to play a forceful role. And the author is aware of this. Every now and then she falls back upon her straw man, the myth of "nothingness," and seems to be proving only that women constitute half the population and as such have had a great deal of influence which has been underwritten in the printed records—which nobody would deny. But her material, her emphasis, her tone are directed toward an effect of equality.

Why? What *is* the point of Mrs. Beard's study? Especially, what point does it have in relation to women's problems today? The only group at present which still puts up a real fight for women's rights is the Communist Party. (We can exclude the "Equal Rights" crowd, whose leaders merely wish to repeal legislation protecting women from certain hazards in industry—and who seem to believe that if you can't change human nature, you *can* outlaw biology.) Mrs. Beard does not exactly ignore the Communists. She blames them for perpetrating the "myth of historic subjection." To be sure, Lenin and Engels didn't rely on Blackstone—but they did assert that women were subjected under capitalism, and without attempting to refute the assertion Mrs. Beard simply includes it in the mythology. She also implies that the Russian Communists slyly held out the promise of equal rights to bait women into supporting the Revolution. How well that promise was actually carried out under socialism is not told by Mrs. Beard. Instead she contents herself with hinting darkly that the excess of Russian women over men since the war will bring up fresh problems. Maybe it will—I should say that an excess of some five million women is a problem in itself. But why does Mrs. Beard, on this particular subject, suddenly desert her historical, retrospective discussion and try to predict the future? It does seem that an author who has scanned so many volumes for material on the treatment of women might have taken one look at a system which alone has solved the most pressing dilemma of modern woman: how to bear and rear children and still take equal place with men in other activities.

But then, Mrs. Beard isn't interested in what goes on in the Soviet Union. In the last few pages of her book she lyricizes women as carriers of a civilization which is confined to "the Western world." East of the Rhine, one finds only a Middle Ages conception of life or "the static conception of utopian communism." What Mrs. Beard means by that last phrase I don't know and I doubt she does. Since she professes a considerable knowledge of ideologies, she should have learned by now that the essence of Communist dialectic is the dynamic theory of motion, change and progress. Perhaps she does know it. Perhaps that is just why she doesn't like it.

BARBARA GILES.

## Man from Emporia

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE. *Macmillan.* $3.75.

"THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE" provides an ample and in many ways usable record of outward events in the life of a kind of American whom history will not reproduce. White was Middle Western and middle-class in origin and gained his stature during the expansive era following the conquest of the Middle Border. He enjoyed and even modestly expanded the freedom he fell heir to, but the daring of the frontiersman was not congenial to him. His talent was to mollify and mediate at a comfortable distance from the new social frontiers within imperialist America.

While exercising this talent he assiduously cultivated his Yankee heritage —the petty bourgeois set of mind which spurred young men on to work and to the worldly success which was still a possible consequence of work. His personal contribution to the work-and-



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Deckinger.

save morality of his clan and class was to put it into practice with gusto and charm. Indeed so adroit was White in adjusting to the world as he found it that he could be publicly and often effectively at odds with some of its grosser aspects, and yet derive considerable revenue and satisfaction from it.

Over the years a change took place in his nudging for reforms on behalf of petty bourgeois democracy. At first, as a heedless smart-alecky young newspaper man, he jeered amiably at "the rag-tag and bob-tail" who made up the Populist movement which swirled around him in Kansas. Later he became a leader in the Bull Moose breakaway from the Republican Party. This he liked to think of as the Populist movement of its generation—although he was candid enough to admit its members were much better dressed than their prototypes.

Recurrently White occupied himself with the busy work of machine politics. But even as he maneuvered county and state conventions toward civic reforms or toward some "realistic" compromise with the dominating "interests," he was vaguely aware of the social forces which were maneuvering him and which eventually pushed him onto the National Committee of the Republican Party.

While White paddled around in politics in his own right or in the wake of his heroes, he gathered news and readers and advertisers for the Emporia *Gazette*—a paper he bought when still quite young, thus becoming the businessman he remained all his life. From Emporia he made frequent forays into the larger scene as a correspondent for national news agencies. Somehow he also found time to be a successful, though not long remembered, writer of fiction.

White's detailed account of close contact with dominant trends and personalities—including several Presidents—breaks off in the Harding regime. Harding was as great an embarrassment to his brand of Republicanism as McKinley had been. For the two decades since Harding's time the reader has to rely on a sparse record of the perennially youthful William Allen White pieced together by his already senile son, William L. White. These last pages show a groping toward some kind of internationalism, but absent is a solid understanding of the role of the Soviet Union. Typically in his last year White could support Willkie's fight against isolationism, and at the same time maintain his old enthusiasm for Hoover. That was the way much of White's life had been. He usually saw two sides to all the questions he genially, if superficially, wrestled with.

PHILIP STANDER.

## Unwanted Stranger

RULERS' MORNING AND OTHER STORIES, *by Joseph G. Hitrec. Harper.* $2.50.

THE main burden of Joseph G. Hitrec's *Rulers' Morning* seems to be his pity for the poor British who live in India bravely carrying on their commercial ventures surrounded by nature's hostility in the form of heat and rain. Were it not for two stories dealing directly, though inadequately, with the fact that there are some people in India who favor its independence, one would hardly be aware that the author acknowledges the real background for the uneasiness of *Sahib* and *Memsahib*.

Hitrec concerns himself primarily with the creation of mood—the mood of individuals, rather than of environment. But the predominant theme, the moody dissatisfactions of his men and women in their love lives, is hardly indigenous to India. His stories are loosely contrived and, more often than not, end with Procrustean abruptness. When Hitrec does write directly of independence, he selects a youthful "revolutionary" character, who in the course of being hounded by the police loses his way long enough to stumble into the arms and bed of some loose woman. Rather exciting, this being a revolutionary, eh what?

The author deals delicately with the discrimination practiced against the In-


MAUD'S
SUMMER-RAY
NORTH BRANCH, Sullivan County, New York
Tel.: Callicoon 95 or 148
MUSIC, DRAMA, DANCE, SPORTS, LAKE
ORCHESTRA LIQUOR BAR
ARTS AND CRAFTS
For travel information and rates call City Office:
call City Office:
Daily, ORchard 4-0970. Sun., PResident 4-6290

Invitation To Relax
Enjoy the serenity of Plum Point—outdoor activities, delicious food. Only 55 miles from New York. Make Reservations.
PLUM POINT
"Year-Round Vacation Resort"
New Windsor, N.Y. Tel: Newburgh 4278

PINECREST in the BERKSHIRES
On the HOUSATONIC RIVER
150 acres of Pines and Hemlocks in a panoramic setting of the rugged Berkshires. Comfortable lodge rooms for two. Bungalows with showers and fireplace, all facing the Housatonic River.
*Boating, Swimming, Fishing, Bicycles, Tennis, Ping-Pong, Recordings, Dancing.*
WEST CORNWALL, CONN.
Cornwall 89-12 *Diana and Abe Berman*

FRIENDLY ACRES
65 beautiful ones in the Poconos—to walk, bicycle, sun-bathe or lazy on. Badminton, ping-pong, other sports available. Excellent home cooking. Extensive music and book libraries. Intimate, informal. Easily accessible by train or bus. Open June 15. $40 per wk.
Write R. F. D. 1—E. MARGENAU
East Stroudsburg, Pa.

HILLTOP Lodge
ON BEAUTIFUL SYLVAN LAKE
Phone: Hopewell Junction 2761
R.R. Station: PAWLING, N.Y.
Only 65 miles from N. Y. C.
Many new improvements and additions this season
GOLF FREE ON PREMISES
TENNIS, Night Tennis, HANDBALL
SWIMMING, BOATING, HORSEBACK, BASEBALL, CYCLING, Etc.
Our Food is Tops
For the Utmost in Vacation Value CHOOSE HILLTOP
Under direction of
Paul Wolfson - Sol Rothauser
N. Y. Office: 277 Broadway
Tel.: COrtland 7-3958
HOPEWELL JUNCTION, N.Y.




PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

COME TO

**Beacon, New York**

Summer Rates:

Cabins: $38, $40 per week
Hotel: $42 per week

Children, to 12 years, $35 per week
$7 per day
(Includes Day Counselor Service)

Be Sure, Reserve Now for Your Vacation or Week-Ends

STAR STUDDED SOCIAL STAFF

BERNARD BECKERMAN • AL MOSS
JERRY JAROSLOW • HILDA RAINER
HILAINE BLOK • GLORIA BECKERMAN,
AMOS COLE • BILL SISKIND

*All Sports—New Facilities*

N. Y. Office: 1 Union Sq. W., Room 810
Tel. GR. 7-5089. Bronx tel. OL. 5-7828
or Beacon 731
I. WALLMAN, *Mgr.*

LAKELAND

Make Your Reservations Now for a Joyous Vacation at

**Camp Lakeland**
ON SYLVAN LAKE
HOPEWELL JUNCTION, N. Y.
Telephone: Hopewell Junction 85

*OPENING . . . JUNE 29*
*With All Facilities for a COMPLETE VACATION*

DELICIOUS FOODS : : ALL SPORTS
TOP-NOTCH ENTERTAINMENT

N.Y.C.R. to Pawling; bus to Camp
Telephone: GRamercy 7-8659
New York Office: 1 UNION SQUARE W.

CHILDREN'S CAMP

CAMP WAWAYANDA, Copake Falls, N. Y. Creative camping for young folks, 2 to 7 years. Professional staff, small groups; private lake. Directed by Parkay Play School, 601 Pelham Pkway North, New York 67, N. Y. OL. 5-6426.

THE HEALTH REST

Newest Type of Health Building Resort—Vegetarian — Delightful Country Estate; Special Diets. Address: Health Rest, Spring Valley, N. Y. Phone: Nanuet 2316 or 967.

VINEYARD LODGE

Beautiful 200-acre farm, new tile showers, fireplace, Tennis. Handball—lake nearby. Bicycles, recordings; well-balanced American-Jewish meals. Adults only $36 weekly. Vineyard Lodge, Ulster Park, N. Y. Kingston 3430.

CITY SLICKER FARM

CITY SLICKER FARM, Jeffersonville, Sull. Co., N. Y. 3-way Panoramic view overlooking North Branch valley. Swimming, barn dances, etc. Colorful rooms. And food! Mmmmm! $30 wk. BOOKLET Managers: the Leonards.

PINE TREE FARM

That simple place you've wanted. Beautiful country, good American Jewish food. Modern Improvements, $25.00 weekly. Reservations after July 7, adults. Alush-7 Ulster St. Kingston, N. Y. 3880 J1.

dian and Eurasian. But he fails to show how this "white supremacy" has left the invader an unwanted stranger after more than three hundred years of residence. A short introduction by another writer points to the "fatal snobbery of class, creed and color" as "the lesson" of this collection of stories, but this remains only an interpretation—which, while plausible, is not likely to be the impression gained by readers. In fact, the same writer warns: "In the amusement and excitement of reading we may miss the lesson, but remember it afterwards." Actually, it is neither the amusement nor the excitement that conceals the lesson, but rather the author's neutrality, which is a sort of literary non-intervention policy. The result, whether intentional or not, is a sympathetic picture of the white European, and a less complimentary one of the Indian. And there is not so much as a hint here of imperialism's criminal responsibility for India's condition. Some creative objectivity!

MACK ENNIUS.

## Charles le Grand

I ACCUSE DE GAULLE, *by Henri de Kerillis. Harcourt, Brace.* $2.75.

A RECENT Public Opinion poll taken in France showed a sharp decline in the popularity of General Charles de Gaulle since his abrupt and unceremonious exit from office as provisional head of the French government. Events have raced ahead so swiftly that de Kerillis' book, published in a French edition last October, seems almost completely out of date. De Kerillis complains: "Now it will be difficult, terribly difficult, to root out De Gaullism from French minds and, above all, to remove de Gaulle from the position of power which he usurped when France was liberated." Fortunately, the overwhelming majority of the French people do not share his opinion, even though they realize that the reactionary groups around de Gaulle have not lost hope of staging a *coup d'etat*.

De Kerillis himself is something of a contradiction. Long in exile, he seems to have become warped, opinionated and embittered. A Rightist deputy in pre-war France, he was the only non-Communist to vote against the Munich Pact. In the early stages of the Spanish War he praised the fascist General Franco, only to repent later of his error. In the period before France's liberation he was a staunch follower of General Giraud. His career has been marked by erratic and unpredictable *sorties*.

In this volume he formulates serious charges against de Gaulle. Some of his accusations, notably that de Gaulle had a number of notorious Cagoulards in his entourage, have proved correct. But on the whole his assessment of the de Gaullist movement is far too one-sided and marked by personal bias in favor of Giraud to be reliable. He bases his hopes for French resurgence on help from Britain and the United States, particularly the latter. Is that perhaps why de Kerillis remains away from his native land, nursing old grudges and rancors in the United States?

JOHN ROSSI.

## Worm's Eye View

ANATOLE FRANCE, *by Jack Axelrad. Harper.* $3.75.

MR. AXELRAD'S book is the study of a great man by a small one, of a Communist by a Social Democrat. Its interest lies in the presentation of considerable material on Anatole France's life, particularly before the Russian Revolution. Mr. Axelrad's objectivity dissolves in the face of that event; it is replaced by Red-baiting and rancor.

From the Parnassian poet who called the Commune a "committee of assassins" and fled Paris rather than serve in the people's militia, to the accomplished writer and working-class leader who wrote that "I am heart and soul truly a Bolshevist," is a stimulating journey.

Two powerful streams of thought met in Anatole France. The earlier one, remaining life-long and deep, was in the best literary tradition—the skepticism of Voltaire, St. Beuve and Renan. Reality for these yielded only to observation or experiment. In their view a writer needed detachment to see into man without sharing his prejudices, his animal desires, his stupidities. Passing from the negative to the positive, France infused the tradition with vital new values. The counterpart of skepticism was not escape, but revolt. The second stream joined the first.

If Voltaire satirized the spiritual failings of the Church, France was anticlerical because he recognized its reactionary hold upon the state, at no time more evident for him than during the Dreyfus case. The trial of Zola for libel was the trial of poor old "Crain-



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

quebille." Legalism, then as now, was the last refuge of entrenched bourbonism against the underprivileged, whether at the level of a peddler or a Zola. And it was not the intellectuals of the salons who listened and helped, but the socialist masses. Skepticism in action which resulted in the release of Zola was morally more satisfactory than an attitudinizing skepticism which titillated the salons. France joined the Socialist Party.

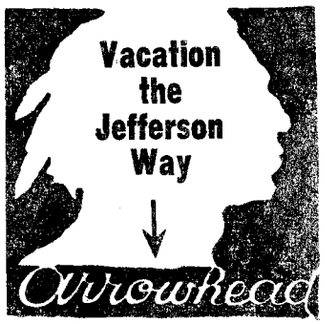
The Marxism of his teacher, Jaures, was not that of Blum and Clemenceau. To France, "no principles could be accepted until they were fully examined, until it was determined in what manner they were valid."

In *Penguin Island* he turned a cold penetrating light on French socialism: "It was the most solemn of customs . . . to put into all the ministries destined to combat socialism a member of the Socialist Party, to the end that the enemies of wealth and property would be ashamed and grieved to fight one of their own, and so that they might not present a united front against those whom but yesterday they condemned." On the eve of the First World War, the *Revolt of the Angels* appeared. It was the epitome of cynicism and contempt, flaying man for his subservience to a society bent on destroying itself. Socialists did not dare complain against France's indictment. Socialist cabinet members had already given the war cry.

France called the peace that followed "a prolongation of the war." Mr. Axelrad dissents, asserting that Nazism would not have come to power if the German people had been really crushed! France wrote: "The hour is come when we must be citizens of the world, or see all civilization perish . . . the proletarians . . . will unite to form one universal proletariat and we shall see fulfilled the great socialist prophecy. The union of the workers will be the peace of the world." The transition was obvious. France became a Communist —the act, says the disturbed Mr. Axelrad, of a man too old and too confused to know what he was doing.

Mr. Axelrad, stealing a page from the literary jackals who tore into the late Theodore Dreiser, chooses to ignore the summation, the final premise, of his subject's philosophy. Going further, he deserts objectivity completely in order to pander to assumed reader prejudices. Not finding among the writings of France support for such contentions as: the Soviet Union was


ALL THE FUN • ALL THE SPORTS
ALL THE ENTERTAINMENT
Plus Stimulating Lectures




**Jefferson School Camp**
PROGRAM BEGINS JUNE 15
For information call:
Jefferson School, 575 6th Avenue, WA. 9-1602
ARROWHEAD, Telephone: Ellenville 502

**Crystal Lake Lodge**
*year 'round in the Adirondacks*
Under the same management as
ARROWHEAD LODGE
SPRING-FED SIXTY ACRE LAKE
1400 ACRES OF GORGEOUS WOODLANDS, ALL PRIVATE
ALL OUTDOOR SPORTS
INFORMAL ENTERTAINMENT
LUXURIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS
*We suggest your early reservations*
CRYSTAL LAKE
Chestertown, New York
TELEPHONE: CHESTERTOWN 2490

NAPANOCH, N. Y.
Tel. Ellenville 625
•
J. SCHWARTZ
Director
•
ALL the little things that make a BIG vacation
FAST TENNIS CORTS . . . CRYSTAL SWIMMING POOL . . . REGULATION HANDBALL COURTS . . . ORCHESTRA . . . SOCIAL STAFF AND ACTING COMPANY . . . DE LUXE ACCOMMODATIONS . . .
PLUS famed Allaben service and cuisine. JUNE RATES. Write for illustrated folder.

**THE WOODLANDS**
AN ADULT RESORT — ACCOMMODATING 65
*For the LAZYBONES:* Well-stocked library - Musical Recordings - Open Fireplaces - Spectacular Country - Culinary Masterpieces.
*For the SPIRITED:* Tennis and Handball - Swimming - Ping-Pong - Badminton - Archery - Moutain Trails - Fishing. • JUNE RATES $40
SIGGIE GOLDNER . . . PHOENICIA, N. Y.
Phoenicia 33 F 4

**We've made plans for your vacation!**
The setting: A scenic dream come true! The dining: a Continental connoisseur's delight! The ★★★★ features: Golf Driving Range, Fast Clay Tennis Courts, Swimming in our own Lake, Handball, Baseball, Table Tennis, Badminton ALSO: Open Dining Pavilion — Superb Recordings, Well-Stocked Library, DeLuxe Quarters (1 or 2 to room) at $55 to $67.50 per week. Write or 'phone early.
**Hurry July 4th Reservations!**
*Gala Dining and Holiday Fun, Special Week-End Rates,*
Your Hostess: Remi Chances
White Gates
WAPPINGERS FALLS, N. Y.
A YEAR 'ROUND RESORT FOR ADULTS
64 miles from N.Y.C. • N.Y. Central to Beacon
Telephone: Wappingers Falls 361W1

CAMP ANN SQUAM
Gloucester, Mass.
ABRAM RESNICK
Director
*This Adult Camp* in safe little sheltered cove near picturesque Gloucester. Salt water swimming, sailing, boating and fishing on premises. Dancing, tennis, trips and all sports. Six hours by train from New York.
*Write for booklet, Rates*

50 miles from New York
*Manamasco LAKE LODGE*
An ideal place to spend a summer vacation • Recordings. Fine Library Open Fireplaces, Congenial Atmosphere, Famous Cuisine. Write or phone, Ridgefield 820
RIDGEFIELD, CONN.

**Camp Followers • of the Trail •**
40 miles from New York City
TENNIS - SWIMMING - HIKING
HANDBALL - SOCIAL HALL
*Excellent Table*
New York Central Railroad to Peekskill. Hudson River Dayline to Indian Point.
WRITE: Buchanan, N. Y.
PHONE: Peekskill 2879

**LUGGAGE**
BRIEF CASES • HANDBAGS • LEATHERWARE
25% discount to union members, veterans and their families.
SALISBURY SPECIALTY CO.
31 E. 27th St. 5th Fl. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Sat. till 1




PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

3rd BIG WEEK!
Artkino Presents
Something New in Soviet Films
"HELLO MOSCOW!"
A Musical Salute From Russia's Younger Generation
Produced in USSR
LATEST SOVIET NEWSREELS
STANLEY 7th Ave., Bet. 41 & 42 Sts. Wisconsin 7-9686

PAUL MUNI in
"Scar Face"
and
"RAIN"
with JOAN CRAWFORD
14th ST. NEAR 4th AVE.

MICHAEL REDGRAVE in
"Johnny in the Cloud"
PLUS
"MOSCOW STRIKES BACK"
Narrated by EDWARD G. ROBINSON
IRVING PLACE IRVING PL. at 15th St.

Ten Day Johns:
Labor's Guerrillas Against Imperialism
"Working class American comes alive."
—DAILY WORKER
JOHN DONAR: Common Man
by Walter and Elizabeth Rogers $2
Victory Library
Box 1294, New Orleans 10, Louisiana

Playwrighting for Broadway
By LEO SHULL
Newest textbook on playwrighting. Based on four years research and interviews with hundreds of producers, scores of playwrights and play agents. Price, $2.00
Recommended as a premium buy by Writer's Digest. Sold at Drama Bookshop, Macy's, Wanamakers, Bookfair. Mailed.
Send $2 to S. Jason, 128 W. 48th St., N.Y.C.

CHESTERFIELD MUSIC SHOP
features . . .
CLASSICS - HOT JAZZ
FOLK MUSIC of all nations
WO. 2-9153
161 Greenwich St., New York

RUSSIAN SKAZKA
Closed for the Summer
Reopens Labor Day
with many surprises

a "vain hope" for France, or "he had made a mistake in joining the Communist Party," the biographer turns to France's "musings." A rare source of material indeed, but a dishonest literary device. Besides, it is naive of Mr. Axelrad to trust that more confidence will be placed in the "musings" of a man he has just accused of being "old and confused" than in words written by that same man in the flush of intellectual vigor.

Other minor conclusions present a key to the biographer's own position. France, he asserts, made a mountain out of the anthill of life; he protested too much. This is hardly a fault, there being much against which to protest. France believed that "man is the measure of all things." The validity of principles must be tested on man himself. But, fears Mr. Axelrad, man might suffer in what he calls "the scuffle of the market place." There is no reason to believe that man has suffered less from principles proved "valid" in an ivory tower atop this anthill.

EMMETT FREED.

# FILMS

THE French film *Stormy Waters*, at the 55th Street Playhouse, is the second of a series of French pictures which will be released in this country by MGM International Films. These films will be presented to "a wide US audience" in contrast to the way similar pictures were shown here before the war, when they were dependent upon the "art" theaters to get any kind of showing at all.

How well this new policy works remains to be seen. The main question is how far the Hollywood company will use its power of selection to insist on Hollywood productions with a French accent.

*Stormy Waters* raises some of these questions. Laurent (Jean Gabin) is the captain of a sea-going tug; he rescues ships which have gone aground or are in danger of cracking up. It is a dangerous occupation and Laurent's wife (Madeleine Renaud), who is ill, tries to persuade him to leave it. Laurent and his crew are cheated of the salvage money on a ship they rescue. This brings into the picture the wife of the captain of the ship—played by Michele Morgan. A sudden intense affair develops between them, terminated almost as soon as it has begun when Laurent's wife dies and he is called from her death-bed for another rescue mission. He goes back to the work toward which he feels a responsibility, and presumably the girl goes out of his life as well.

Such a story suffers in the retelling, but it is clear that it is a compound of disparate elements. Laurent's job is Hollywood men-against-the-sea stuff. The story of his affair with Catharine, brief as it is and full of unresolved elements, nevertheless is told with a subtlety and honesty that is usually associated with the tradition of the French movie. The main criticism of this part of the story is that not enough space is given to its development. For the same reason, Laurent's attitude toward his wife is full of unnecessary ambiguities.

The picture suggests an uneasy marriage of Hollywood and French methods. To those who expected great things of the post-resistance French film, it will be a great disappointment. But the acting has a standard excellence and in spite of its weakness, the picture is ahead of the Hollywood batting average. There is no reason to believe that the great movies we expect of France will not yet be made.

"SOMEWHERE IN THE NIGHT" is the latest in the current crop of whodunits. According to the "vital statistics" handed out at the preview, Somerset Maugham read the original story and liked it so much that he "made potent suggestions for improving its filmableness." That's a mouth-filling and no doubt potent phrase in the patois employed by film publicity writers, but aside from a couple of bows in the direction of the past war there is very little to distinguish this movie from others of the same species.

It all begins when John Hodiak regains consciousness after a Japanese grenade knocks him out on one of those Pacific islands. The Marine Corps, of which he is a part, insists upon identifying him as George Taylor, although he is sure he doesn't know George Taylor from Adam's off ox.

His particular postwar problem then becomes one of determining his own identity, lost through amnesia. A broken arm and jaw keep him from revealing his secret. At a hospital in Hawaii he is given his wallet and finds in it a letter from a girl. It is



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a brief letter, but it leaves no doubt that this guy Taylor is one of the heels of the world.

Back in the States, after his liberation, Taylor goes through his belongings and finds a baggage check. It is for a brief case containing a .38 automatic and a letter from one Larry Cravat. From here the search for Larry Cravat, who seems the only possible link with Taylor's forgotten past, leads him all around the town and turns up a fine assortment of shady characters.

The trail leads from a Turkish bath to a fancy night-club (where he meets The Girl, Nancy Guild) to a fortune teller's shack on the waterfront, to an insane asylum. Along the way, Taylor is clipped, beaten and shot at by various thugs, including Lou Nova.

His heavy burden is lightened somewhat by Margo Woode, who makes passes at him, and by Nancy Guild, who by this time has a soft light in her eyes.

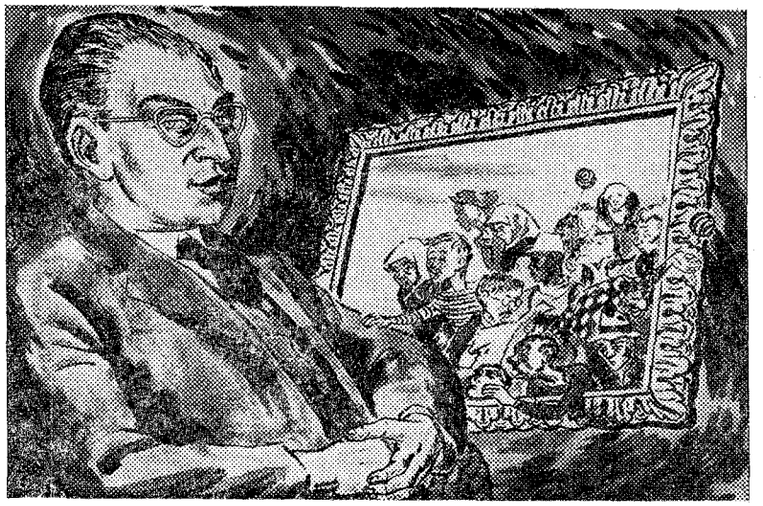
Aside from a certain woodenness which seems written into the character, John Hodiak does a good job as George Taylor. Nancy Guild manages to play the part of the night club singer as if she had just wandered in by mistake from a girls' school, probably in Vermont. The rest of the cast get a chance to cut a few didoes.

The picture lags considerably in the early stages. The camera work is partly responsible for this. Ever since some of Orson Welles' methods became common, there has been a tendency to use underlighting, apparently on the mistaken assumption that this alone creates atmosphere.

This kind of story, the journey among thieves, is one of the major myths of our time. It was created as a work of art by Dashiel Hammett, reshaped for the movies primarily through the work of Hitchcock. It is a symbolist concept of reality, and through remaking, the elements are becoming stylized. As a myth it has some validity. Since it is one of Hollywood's few contacts with the real world, it's about time they gave it a new shot in the arm before it becomes as abstract as the ballet.

"WITHOUT RESERVATIONS" is of the genre that has been called "screwball comedy." If you see it, I'm sure you'll find a much shorter and more descriptive term for it.

It all happens because Claudette

NEW MASSES

*Announces . . .*

THE FOURTH ANNUAL

EXHIBITION & SALE

OF MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY

PAINTINGS

for Southern California

AUCTION SALE

*FRIDAY EVENING, JULY 19*
*8:00 p. m.*

AMERICA'S FOREMOST ARTISTS WILL BE REPRESENTED IN

**oils - gouaches - etchings - silk screens**
**water colors - drawings**

AND OTHER MEDIA, THUS MAKING IT POSSIBLE TO BUY THE FINEST ART WORK IN THE COUNTRY AT A PRICE COMMENSURATE WITH YOUR BUDGET.

***Paintings will be exhibited***
***from Monday, July 15, through Friday, July 19***

AT THE

**BEVERLY-WILSHIRE HOTEL**
**9506 Wilshire Boulevard**
**Hollywood California**




PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# NEW MASSES

## Classified Advertisements

**50¢ a line. Payable in advance. Min. charge $1.50. Approx. 7 words to a line. Deadline, Fri., 4 p.m.**

RoKo GALLERY RoKo FRAMES

**CHANGING GROUP EXHIBITS OF SPECIAL INTEREST THROUGH JULY**

We solve all framing problems. Original designs and finishes.

**51 Greenwich Ave. (East of 7th Ave. & 11 St.) CHelsea 2-7049**

### EYE CARE

**EUGENE STEIN, Optometrist**—Eye examinations—Glasses Fitted—Visual Training—Prescription Sun Glasses. Room 507, 13 Astor Place, N. Y. 3, near East 8th St. and Broadway. GR. 7-0930.

### INSURANCE

**PAUL CROSBIE**—INSURANCE of every kind whatever your needs. Frequent savings. 11 E 49th St., New York 17, N. Y. Phone EL. 5-5234

### PIANO NEWS

Your old upright piano RESTYLED TO SPINET TYPE piano without loss of tone. Piano mechanism completely reconditioned. Case refinished and ivories replaced. N. Y. Piano Sales Co., 1161 Bedford Ave., Brooklyn. St. 3-8459.

### TYPEWRITER CO.

Progressive typewriter shop, veteran operated. 100% union. Low rates, pick up and deliver. 633 Melrose Avenue. JE. 8-1604.

### TRUCKS FOR HIRE

DAILY TRIPS to Rockaway, Long Beach, Coney Island. Hollywood Movers. 1774 Eastbourne Ave. Call Ed. Wendell Tremont 2-3221.

### FOR RENT—SUMMER SEASON

Newly furnished apartment, three rooms and bath, all improvements, to rent for Summer Season, Goldens Bridge Colony. For price and particulars write M. Libster, Goldens Bridge, or telephone Katonah 695.

### WILL SUBLET

Two room and bath modern furnished apt. in Bronx. Sub lease for ten weeks. Box 16, N. M.

### APT. TO SHARE

Young woman will share charming 4½ room apartment with one or two professional or business women or couple. Finest location. $33-$38 per week. Write Box 41 New Masses.

### ROOM FOR RENT

Attractive Furnished Room, Manhattan. Manhattan. All modern appointments. Single person only. Box 16.

### CAMP PINELAND

CAMP PINELAND, Kingston, N. Y. Children, 5-14. Swimming, Camping, All Sports. Expert supervision. $250 per Season. $140 Half Season. Tel. JE. 7-2151 and BU. 7-6957.

***School of the New Theatre*** **INTENSIVE COURSES in acting and playwrighting***

for advanced students and professionals

**July 8th to August 23th**

**BRETT WARREN . . . *Director***

* Only playwrights with work in progress accepted.

***Registration from June 17th***
7:30 TO 9:00 P.M.

**430 AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS**


Colbert writes a book. It may not be as great as the Bible or *Forever Amber*, but it has Hollywood and the book clubs jumping. So the author has to go to the West Coast to make a movie out of the book.

On the train out to the coast she meets a couple of Marine flyers—John Wayne and Don DeFore. Wayne, she decides, is exactly the man to play the hero of her novel. Her problem, then, becomes one of steering him up to the camera. This gets difficult when it is made evident that her dream-hero looks upon her book as a kind of bad joke. She thereupon conceals her identity under a phony name and defends the book with the logic and the fervor of a high school debater arguing for free silver. He attacks her creations with more than a hint of male chauvinism. With both of them talking like people with their heads under water, comes love.

The path of true love, etc. At Chicago she gives up her compartment on the Chief to follow the Marines on another train. Kicked off for conduct unbecoming a lady, the trio do the rest of the trip by car. After sundry adventures (I got lost somewhere in Kansas) our heroine's identity becomes known, and the hero, thinking he has been used, walks off in a sulk.

Of course, it all ends well. Wayne looks somewhat embarrassed throughout most of the performance. Dan De Fore struggles manfully and well. Other players include Jack Benny, Cary Grant, and Louella Parsons—all playing themselves, but without distinction.

THOMAS MCGRATH.

SOVIET youngsters during the war were busy people. Not only did they pinch-hit for absent adults in every conceivable field, but they had the job of learning trades for the immense task of postwar reconstruction. And with all this, they had to carry on their regular school curriculum, their preparation as citizens of the world. So special schools were set up for fourteen-to-eighteen-year-olds which taught not only trades but mathematics, history, languages, literature—and dramatics, singing and dancing as well.

*Hello Moscow*, at the Stanley, is an account of the lighter side of life at the Magnitogorsk training school. The stars are some of the amateur dramatic students of that school, and the plot, which by now seems standard in Soviet musical productions, concerns a musical contest in Moscow and how this particular bunch of kids managed to be chosen to take part in it. There is a good deal of business about an accordian, some singing which bravely struggles against the recording facilities, and a number of dances, many of which seem first-rate for dancers of any age but some of which are so overwhelmed by shimmering Hollywood backdrops and circular staircases and bad lighting and photography that they are practically invisible. The film also offers proof that acrobatic dances can be just as dreary in the Soviet Union as in the US.

However, this quibbling aside, *Hello Moscow* does have its share of those magic ingredients that mark even the least of the Artkino offerings: sincerity, warmth and humor. The children are wonderful, as usual, because they are just playing themselves, and from all the evidence Soviet children are a very special group of human beings.

By the way, remember the scene in *The Youth of Maxim* where a fallen 1905 warrior hands on his accordian to a comrade before he dies? Ever wonder what became of his comrade—and the accordian? Well, the comrade became a grandfather during the intervening forty years, and when *Hello Moscow* opens he still has the accordian. If you want to know what happened to it after that, drop in at the Stanley.

BETTY MILLARD.

*(Joseph Foster, NM's movie critic, is in Hollywood.)*

## Records

BOTH Aaron Copland and Elie Siegmeister are noteworthy figures in contemporary music, but in contrasting ways. Copland's path has been a kind of intellectual pilgrim's progress, producing one of the first works of American abstraction in his "Piano Variations," and then moving in craftsman-like fashion through jazz, movie music and ballet. Always regarded as an educative force by composers, he has never become the major figure he promised to be. Siegmeister has bent his efforts towards breaking down the barrier between serious and popular music through the popularization of genuine American folk songs, and has awakened many people to the beauty and human warmth of this great musical literature.

It is a welcome sign of the direction



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

being taken by American music that the two newly written and recorded works of these men, Copland's "Appalachian Suite" and Siegmeister's "Ozark Set," are not as far apart as their work was ten years ago. The Copland piece, improved by pruning down from its original ballet form, is one of his sweetest in melody, highlighted by a set of variations on an old Shaker tune. It has at the same time his old finesse in counterpoint and thematic combination, and transmits a feeling of an organic experience quite apart from any memories of the ballet. Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony make a noble recording (Victor 1046).

The Siegmeister work is a collection of heartwarming tunes set generally very simply. It is a kind of enjoyable work that will reach and move audiences cold to more ambitious efforts. The performance honors go to Mitropoulos and the Minneapolis Orchestra (Columbia X-262).

The Brahms Violin Concerto is given an impassioned reading at the hands of Joseph Szigeti that will surprise even those who know him to be the most profound interpretive mind among concert violinists. In such a performance even the most familiar passages take on new life. Weaknesses of the records are an occasional unsteadiness of bow, Conductor Ormandy's inability to see anything but the obvious, and a recording that is full-bodied but lacks the clarity and balance we have a right to expect these days (Columbia 603).

The young violinist Isaac Stern reveals himself to be a first-rate musical intelligence in the Beethoven C Minor Sonata, Op. 30, No. 2, which shows the composer in a rare mood of tender song. The records are a pleasure to hear, although somewhat more can be done with the piano part, always favored by Beethoven, than Alexander Zakin does in his capable accompaniment (Columbia 604).

The tragedy in the Rise Stevens *Carmen* Album is not what happens to *Carmen* but what is happening to Miss Stevens' voice. The role demands more flexibility and characterization than she can give, and the resulting strain is evident. Jobin's Don Jose is relaxed and well-schooled singing which shines by comparison. The album includes all the popular tunes, and George Sebastian's conducting hints at a wholesome study of Beecham (Columbia 607).

S. FINKELSTEIN.


"Deeply moving . . . Every one should see it."
—PAUL ROBESON

NOW YOU CAN SEE
"ON WHITMAN AVENUE"
Broadway's most exciting drama
with CANADA LEE and WILL GEER
CORT THEATRE, 48th Street East of Broadway. AIR-COOLED
Evenings Including SUNDAY 8:30. Matinees SAT., SUN. & JULY 4

THEATRE PARTIES AT SUBSTANTIAL DISCOUNTS
YOUR CLUB OR ORGANIZATION CAN MAKE A PROFIT

THEATRE PARTY RATES
EVENINGS — $3.60 Orchestra Seats $2.60
$2.40 Mezzanine Seats $1.90
MATINEES — $2.40 Orchestra Seats $1.40
$1.80 Mezzanine Seats $1.05

You can buy theatre party seats in blocks of 25 and up that will be good for any performance. These are easy to sell. You will get good seats if you order early in advance.
SEATS NOW ON SALE 6 WEEKS IN ADVANCE
Call Mrs. Cadden, Circle 6-7654 or Circle 5-8857 FOR THEATRE PARTY SEATS
LEE and MARVIN, 64 W. 56th St., N. Y. C.



★
summer one-week specials

Morning becomes electric . . . with educational opportunity, when you sign up for any or all of these special one-week morning courses. Each lasts five days, 3 hours daily for a 15 hour total. Tuition is $7 for each course, $35 for all six. Plan *now* to devote your summer mornings to this "capsule college-education."

Guided tours to: Union Halls, Labor Newspaper Offices, and Mass Organizations with Jefferson School instructors.

★ What is Philosophy? • *Francis Franklin*
July 8—July 12 • 10:00 A.M.—1:00 P.M.
★ Science of Society: A Survey • *Harold Collins*
July 15—July 19 • 10:00 A.M.—1:00 P.M.
★ Political Economy 1: Value, Wages, Profits • *Elizabeth Lawson*
July 22—July 26 • 10:00 A.M.—1:00 P.M.
★ Principles of Marxism • *Albert Prago*
July 29—Aug 2 • 10:00 A.M.—1:00 P.M.
★ World Politics: 1914-1946 • *David Goldway*
Aug. 5—Aug. 9 • 10:00 A.M.—1:00 P.M.
★ Foundations of Leninism • *Francis Franklin*
Aug. 12—Aug. 16 • 10:00 A.M.—1:00 P.M.

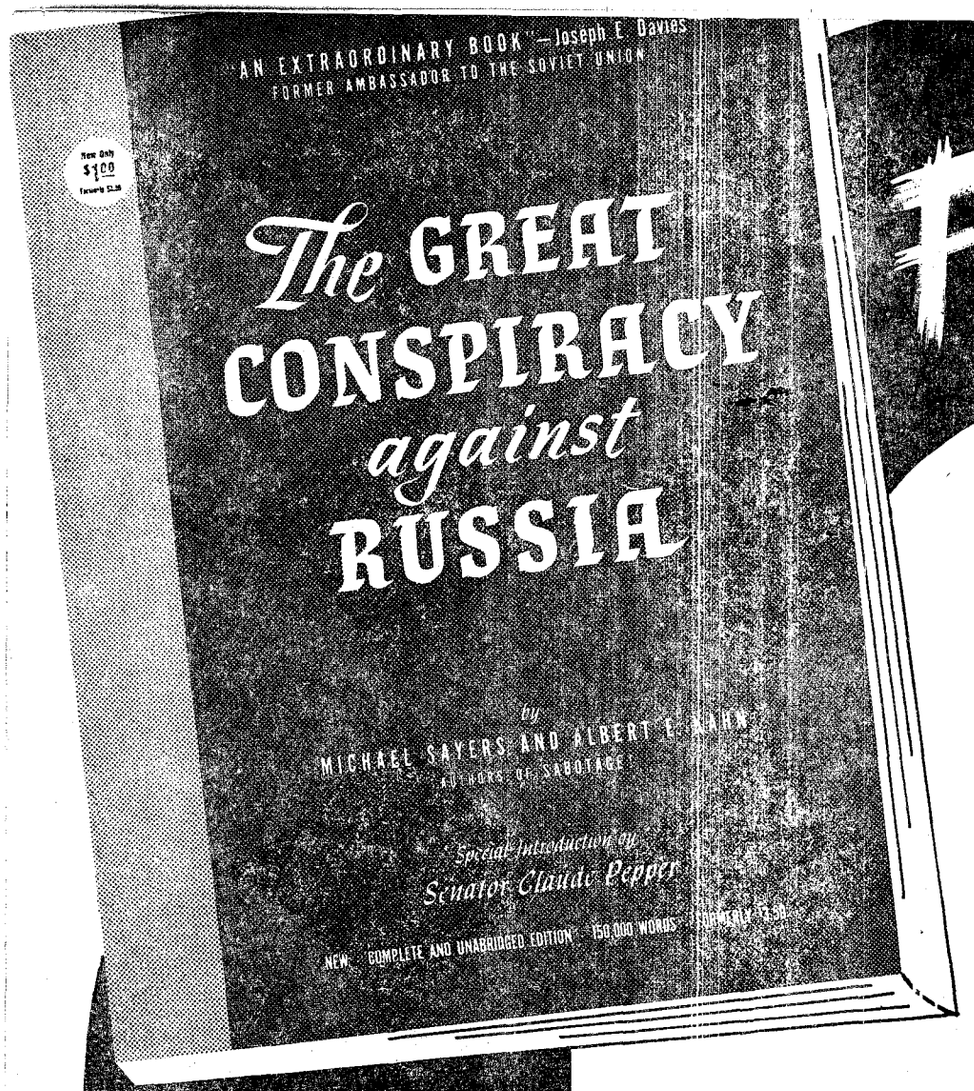
Registration begins July 1
Classes begin July 8

*75 courses in History, Politics, Economy, Labor, The Arts, Workshop Courses*

Jefferson School
OF SOCIAL SCIENCE
*575 Avenue of the Americas, N. Y. 11 (at 16) WA 9-1602*




PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED


AN EXTRAORDINARY BOOK —Joseph E. Davies
FORMER AMBASSADOR TO THE SOVIET UNION
Now Only $1.00
The GREAT CONSPIRACY against RUSSIA
by
MICHAEL SAYERS AND ALBERT E. KAHN
AUTHORS OF SABOTAGE
Special Introduction by
Senator Claude Pepper
NEW COMPLETE AND UNABRIDGED EDITION 150,000 WORDS

# FREE

**The latest expose by Sayers and Kahn. Shows the long history of imperialist war plots against the Soviet Union — from Churchill and Clemenceau to Byrnes and Bevin. After you read it, pass it along to your friends.**

## to each new SUBSCRIBER

### for new subscriber

Put me down as an NM subscriber and send my free copy of "The Great Conspiracy Against Russia."

*Enclosed is $6.00 (regular yearly rate).*

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____

### for bringing in 2 new subs

I've earned my free copy of "The Great Conspiracy Against Russia" with these two new NM subscribers (they get free copies, too). Enclosed find $12.00 at regular $6.00 yearly rates.

Name _____

Address _____

Name _____

Address _____

My Name _____

Address _____

CARNEGIE LIBRARY
OF PITTSBURGH

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED